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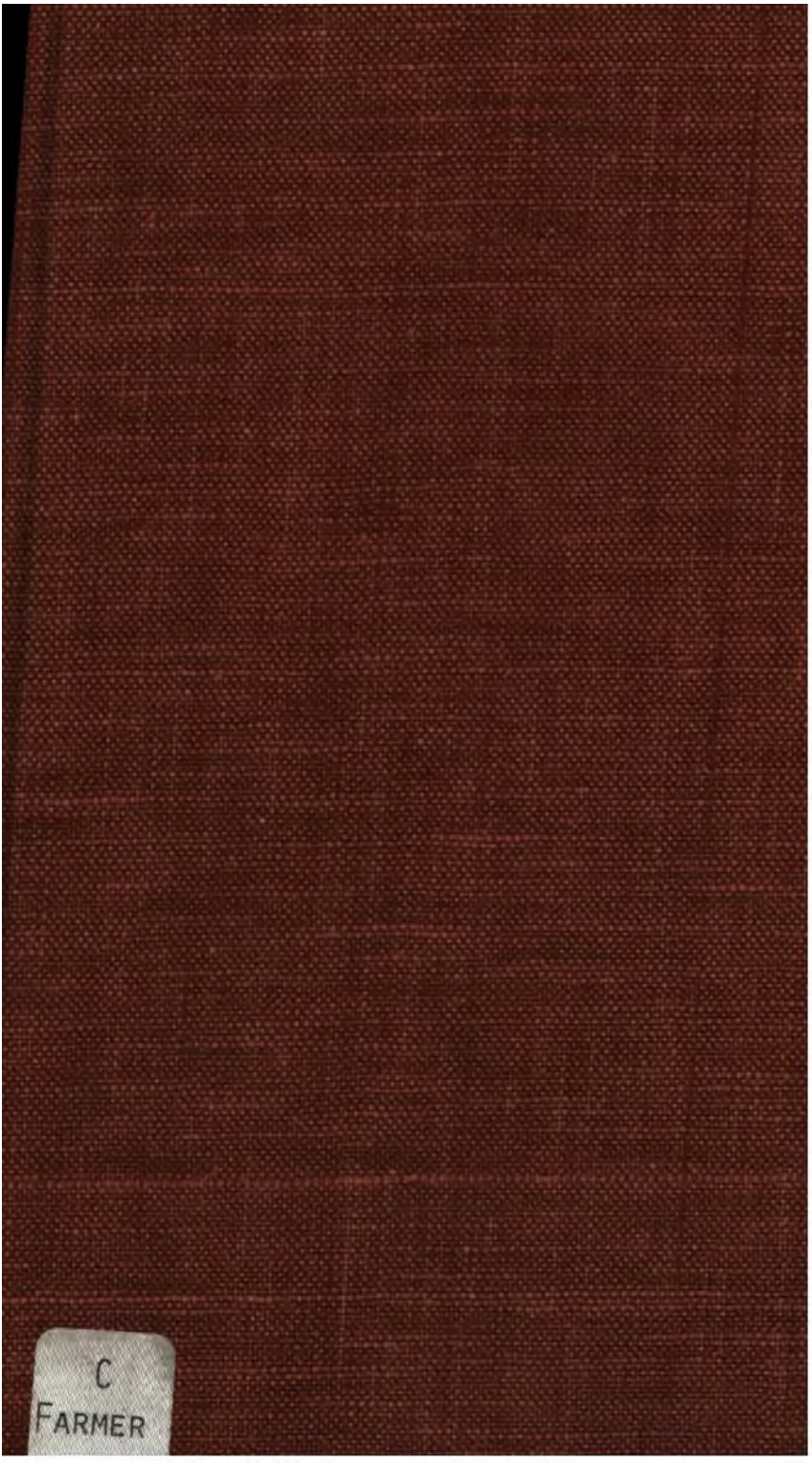

C
FARMER

Theological School
IN
HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

BEQUEST OF
JAMES WALKER, D.D.

RECEIVED JUNE 19, 1875.

MEMOIRS

OF

THE LATE REVEREND AND LEARNED

HUGH FARMER.

PRICE THREE SHILLINGS IN BOARDS.

216

Lately Re-publiſhed,

DR. JOHNSON'S LIFE OF DR. WATTS,

WITH NOTES.

Containing Corrections and Additions, with ſome original Papers.

Preparing for the Preſs.

LETTERS

BY THE LATE REV. JOB ORTON,

VOL. II.

Written chiefly to young Diſſenting Miniſters, and Students for the Miniſtry; with Memoirs of his Life.

*** This work will be printed in a manner uniform with a former Volume of LETTERS to a young CLERGYMAN, publiſhed

By the Rev. THOS. STEDMAN,

Rector of St. Chad's, Shrewſbury.

Ὅτι αἱ μὲν ἐπιϛολαὶ, βαρεῖαι καὶ ἰσχυραί——2 Cor. x. 10.

22

MEMOIRS

OF

THE LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF,

THE LATE REVEREND AND LEARNED

HUGH FARMER:

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A PIECE OF HIS, NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED, PRINTED FROM THE ONLY REMAINING MANUSCRIPT OF THE AUTHOR.

ALSO,

SEVERAL ORIGINAL LETTERS, AND AN EXTRACT FROM HIS ESSAY

ON

THE CASE OF BALAAM.

Taken from his Manuscript, since destroyed.

BY THE LATE MICHAEL DODSON, ESQ.

Hujus multi quidem in sanctam scripturam extant commentarii, sed majis viva voce ecclesiis profuit.—JEROM, in Vit. Pantæni.

...LIBRARY.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. N. LONGMAN AND O. REES, PATER-NOSTER-ROW,

By G. Woodfall, No. 22, Paternoster-row.

1804.

C

Farmer

PREFACE.

IT hath been well obſerved — that "to "treaſure up memorials of the wiſe, the "learned and the good, is to fulfil an "exalted duty to mankind*." Under an impreſsion of this ſentiment, as well as from a high veneration for the memory of a moſt valuable friend, the writer of the following ſheets ventures to preſent them to the public, chearfully relying on the candour of judicious readers to apologiſe for what ſome may deem defective in the hiſtory of ſo diſtinguiſhed a character.

The life of Mr. Farmer being chiefly ſpent in retirement, and almoſt the whole of it in one ſituation, was not likely to abound with remarkable incidents, and

* Monthly Review for February, 1804, Art. Reid.

conſequently

conſequently cannot be expected to afford materials for any conſiderable length of biographical narrative. The principal circumſtances relative to this great man are thoſe which reſpect his character and his writings. To theſe, Dr. KIPPIS has done ample juſtice in the fifth volume of the BIOGRAPHIA BRITANNICA.

But that large and expenſive work being in the hands of comparatively few readers who perſonally knew Mr. Farmer, or of thoſe who, from an acquaintance with his writings, may wiſh to know ſomething of the Author, it has been thought deſirable that a ſeparate account ſhould be publiſhed, with ſome additional anecdotes, which the above learned author probably did not poſſeſs.

This is now undertaken by one who had the honour of an intimate acquaintance with Mr. Farmer, as well as with ſeveral of his connections. Though in the preſent performance a free uſe has been made of Dr. KIPPIS's materials, and his words are ſometimes adopted, the general compoſition and method

method are new, and a few ſmall miſtakes of his are rectified.

It is much to be regretted that, in conſequence of the general deſtruction of Mr. Farmer's papers, the world is deprived, not only of ſeveral valuable pieces of his own, but likewiſe of his literary correſpondence, which might have afforded a pleaſing and uſeful addition to theſe Memoirs*. The compiler of them, however, is happy in being able to accompany them with two of his papers which have been fortunately preſerved, and which, he apprehends, will be eſteemed great literary curioſities.

The firſt of theſe the author himſelf had depoſited in the hands of a friend, with a view to its publication, for the ſake of vindicating his character and writings againſt the ſevere accuſations of one of his antagoniſts. The other, containing an Extract from his Eſſay on the Caſe of Balaam, was taken by his learned friend Mr. DODSON,

* Since the above was written, the editor has been favoured with a number of Mr. Farmer's letters in his own hand writing, out of which a few are ſelected and inſerted in the Appendix.

and

and was communicated ſince this work was committed to the preſs. Of both theſe pieces a fuller account will be given in the proper place.

It is a ſatisfaction to the Editor, that this work has the countenance of ſeveral of his brethren, who well knew Mr. Farmer; one of whom, in high and general eſtimation, both for character and talents, writes as follows; "I cannot but expreſs my entire "approbation of your intention to publiſh "Mr. Farmer's Life. I have often re-"gretted that a man of ſuch eminence "ſhould have gone off the ſtage with ſo "little public notice. I always conſidered "him as a perſon of great talents and learn-"ing, and as a *truly* evangelical and rational "chriſtian."

Any communications by which this Work may be improved, will be thankfully received, and inſerted in another edition, if called for, or in a ſupplement to this.

May 3, 1804.

MEMOIRS

MEMOIRS

OF THE

REVEREND HUGH FARMER.

MR. FARMER'S remote anceſtors were inhabitants of North Wales, but of what particular part cannot be now aſcertained, nor have we any other information concerning them, than that he had heard them reported to be very reſpectable and religious. His grandfather, by the female line, from whom he received his given name, was the Reverend HUGH OWEN, of Bronyclyder, in Merionethſhire. He was educated for the church in the Univerſity of Oxford; but the Act of Uniformity paſsing in 1662, about the time of his appearing as a candidate for the miniſtry, and finding himſelf unable, with a good conſcience, to comply with the terms which that Act required, he declined applying for Epiſcopal Ordination, and took

his lot with the Nonconformiſts, among whom his name ſtands with diſtinguiſhed honour* in Dr. CALAMY's "Account of the Ejected Miniſters." From thence it appears, that upon quitting the univerſity, he went to London; but with what view we are not informed: probably it was only to conſult with the miniſters there, as many others did, reſpecting his future line of conduct. He ſoon afterwards retired into his native country, where he lived upon a ſmall eſtate of his own, and preached *gratis* to a number of poor and ignorant people, at a great number of places, ſeveral of which were twenty miles diſtant, and ſome thirty from his own habitation, and he met with great ſucceſs. But his indefatigable labours, his frequent travelling in the night, over bleak mountains, and in all weathers, together with bad accommodations in the houſes of poor people, greatly impaired his health. He was a truly primitive apoſtolical chriſtian, eminent for his meekneſs and hu-

* See Dr. Calamy's Account, page 710, and Continuation, page 838.

milit-

mility: of ſo unblemiſhed and exemplary a deportment, as to ſecure the eſteem of the principal gentlemen of the country around him, to ſeveral of whom he was nearly allied. In the courſe of his life he experienced ſeveral providential and remarkable deliverances, which Dr. Calamy has recorded. He died at the age of 62, in the year 1699.

Mr. JAMES OWEN, (who it is ſuppoſed was related to him, and was afterwards at Oſweſtry and at Salop, and very uſeful as a Tutor*) was for ſome time his aſſiſtant, and preached his funeral ſermon; but by his ſtrict injunction refrained from ſaying any thing about him on the occaſion. We have no account of his family, except of his daughter, as being the mother of Mr. Farmer; and of one ſon, Mr. JOHN OWEN, who was a diſſenting

* An account of his life and writings was publiſhed by his brother, Dr. CHARLES OWEN. Mr. Matthew Henry preached and publiſhed his funeral ſermon. See Henry's Works, folio, p. 577.

 miniſter,

miniſter, but did not ſurvive the age of thirty years.

A more particular account of Mr. HUGH OWEN was drawn up by his grandſon, the ſubject of theſe memoirs, to be inſerted in a biographical work; which, as a proof of his veneration for the memory of his pious anceſtor, will be given at length in an Appendix to this publication.

Of Mr. Farmer's parents no other account can be given, than that they were perſons of diſtinguiſhed piety and virtue, who lived in good eſteem at a village a few miles from Shrewſbury; and there Mr. Farmer was born in the year 1714. Being early devoted to the Chriſtian miniſtry among the Proteſtant diſſenters, he received the firſt part of his grammatical learning in a ſchool of conſiderable reputation at that time, which was founded by two of his progenitors, at Llanegrin, near Towyn, in Merionethſhire. From hence he was removed to perfect his claſsical education under the tuition of Dr. CHARLES OWEN, a diſſenting miniſter at Warrington; a gentleman of great eminence

nence for learning and piety, ſweetneſs of temper, and politeneſs of manners*. He uſually had two or three young men under his care, of whom one was Mr. JOS ORTON, of Shrewſbury, with whom Mr. Farmer afterwards had a cloſe intimacy, and maintained for many years an epiſtolary correſpondence.

About the year 1730 Mr. Farmer entered upon his courſe of academical ſtudies at Northampton, under the direction of the juſtly celebrated Dr. PHILIP DODDRIDGE, and was one of his firſt pupils. Here he ſo diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his abilities, application, and improvement, that his tutor was ſoon ſenſible of the honour he was likely to derive from being concerned in his education; and though the doctor did not live to ſee the reputation he attained in the literary world, he always ſpoke of him in terms of the higheſt reſpect, as ſome of his later pupils could witneſs.

* Biog. Brit. Vol. v. p. 309. Article ORTON. This gentleman was the author of the ingenious "Diſſertation on Serpents."

As ſoon as Mr. Farmer had finiſhed his ſtudies at Northampton, he accepted an invitation to a ſervice in which his tutor had preceded him, and to which it may be preſumed he recommended him; namely that of an aſſiſtant to Mr. DAVID SOME*, a miniſter of diſtinguiſhed reputation at MARKET HARBOROUGH, in Leiceſterſhire, where Dr. Doddridge had for ſome time reſided, and firſt entered upon the buſineſs of academical education, chiefly through Mr. Some's influence, which in that country was very conſiderable.

How long Mr. Farmer continued in this ſituation doth not appear, nor what was the cauſe of his leaving it. Though it was truly reſpectable, his talents qualified him for a ſuperior and more public ſtation, and his inclination probably led him to prefer the vicinity of London.

WILLIAM COWARD, Eſq. of Waltham-

* This circumſtance Dr. Kippis, in the Biographia has omitted, where he ſpeaks of Mr. Farmer's beginning his miniſtry at *Walthamſtow*, which is undoubtedly a miſtake.—For ſome account of the above Mr. SOME, the reader is referred to ORTON's Life of Doddridge, p. 50—52.

ſtow,

ſtow, a gentleman of large property, who devoted a conſiderable portion of it to the education of young perſons for the miniſtry, invited Mr. Farmer (moſt probably on the recommendation of Dr. Doddridge, to whoſe ſtudents Mr. Coward was a liberal benefactor) to become his chaplain, in whoſe family he for ſome time preached, there being at that time no meeting-houſe in this village. But the diſſenters who reſided there, to whom Mr. Farmer's ſervices were highly acceptable, ſpeedily erected a place of worſhip, on a piece of ground which was given for the purpoſe by WILLIAM SNELL, Eſq. a gentleman who reſided in the neighbourhood, and a regular congregation of proteſtant-diſſenters was formed at Walthamſtow, which ſoon greatly increaſed.

Mr. Farmer for ſome time reſided in Mr. Coward's houſe; but the oddities of that gentleman's character ſoon obliged him to leave it. Among other of his whims, he took it into his head to eſtabliſh a rule that his houſe ſhould be ſhut at a very early hour in the evening, after which no perſon whatever, whether a reſident or a viſitor, was

was ſuffered to have admittance. Mr. Farmer happening once to ſtay out ſomewhat beyond the time allowed, was not permitted to have the door opened to him; in conſequence of which he betook himſelf to the houſe of Mr. SNELL above mentioned, which occaſioned the rough treatment he met with from his patron to prove one of the moſt fortunate circumſtances of his life. For Mr. SNELL, who from that time engaged him to reſide in his own family, was a gentleman of an excellent diſpoſition, and moſt reſpectable character, who contributed every thing in his power to render the ſituation of his gueſt eaſy and happy. He was a Solicitor in the Court of Chancery, of the higheſt reputation for his ability and integrity, of whom "no greater encomium needs to be given, than that he lived in the habits of intimacy with the Lord Chancellor Hardwick, Sir John Strange, and others of the firſt eminence in that day, at the bar, and on the bench."

In this worthy family Mr. Farmer reſided above thirty years. After the death of Mr. Snell

Snell, he continued with Mrs. Snell till the time of her deceaſe; whoſe laſt days of widowhood were rendered happy by the ſociety of ſo cheerful, kind, and pious an inmate. And the advantage to Mr. Farmer was equal; for ſhe continued to treat him, as Mr. Snell had always done, on the footing of the trueſt friendſhip: his biographer ſays, "more like an *equal* than an *inferior*;" a mode of expreſsion which may be juſtly excepted againſt, and which his worthy patrons would not have admitted; for if good ſenſe, politeneſs, learning, benevolence, and piety, be allowed to have the preference to fortune, Mr. Farmer may be juſtly pronounced at leaſt their equal; in the latter only was he their inferior, and that was not conſidered by them, nor ought it by any, as placing him in a ſtate of inferiority.

There was only one circumſtance attending his ſituation in this family which, after the deceaſe of his worthy friends, was the cauſe of any regret; which was, that the pleaſing accommodation which he had met with in this hoſpitable abode, free from every

every domeſtic care, was the principal occaſion of his remaining all his days in a ſtate of celibacy; the evil of which towards the cloſe of life, when he was left alone, and the cares of a houſe-eſtabliſhment devolved upon him, he ſeverely felt, and ſometimes, with an air of pleaſantry, lamented to his friends; at the ſame time cautioning thoſe of them in the early period of life, againſt the like inconveniences. When viſiting ſome of his acquaintance, with whom a younger miniſter boarded, he would ſometimes ſay, in his jocular manner, "Don't uſe him too well: treat him roughly, that he may not be tempted to follow my example." Though this anecdote may appear trivial, and cauſe a ſmile, the ſubject is ſerious, and is capable of a very valuable improvement. The conjugal ſtate, if entered into with prudence, is doubtleſs of all others the happieſt, and many in the decline of life have had cauſe for bitter regret that they miſſed the favourable opportunity for enjoying it.

A ſingle life, however, has its advantages, eſpecially to a ſtudious man; and Mr. Farmer

mer improved them to the utmoſt. In his peaceful abode with this excellent family, he enjoyed a happy leiſure for proſecuting his favourite ſtudies, ſo as to acquire a large fund of ſolid learning, particularly of that kind which qualified him for the illuſtration and defence of divine revelation, to which important uſe he applied it, as the public have witneſſed in his elaborate writings, of which an account will be given in the ſequel.

But though a large proportion of Mr. Farmer's time and labour was employed in the acquiſition of that knowledge which was neceſſary to the production of ſuch maſterly publications, it was not to the neglect of the more important duties of his office as a miniſter of the goſpel. In theſe it was his declared opinion, that every miniſter ought to excel; and therefore he recommended it to ſtudents for the chriſtian miniſtry to make this their aim; lamenting it as an impropriety and abſurdity, that ſo many ſhould ſpend ſuch a large portion of their time in learning ſo many other

things beſides, and inſtead of, thoſe which it is their principal buſineſs to teach. His own example correſponded with his opinion.

As a preacher, he attained to diſtinguiſhed eminence. His ſermons were ſtudied with care, and compoſed with accuracy. The ſubjects of them were the moſt highly intereſting, and the ſtrain of them practical, ſpiritual, and evangelical. Though his diſcourſes were not often doctrinal, and ſeldomer controverſial, he frequently introduced the great truths of the goſpel "with ſuch a ſwell of language," as ſhewed his high reliſh for them, and ſometimes occaſioned ſuch hearers as were leſs affected towards them, to be afraid that "he was going too far," and yet in ſo ſcriptural and rational a manner as they could not reſiſt. But while the grand peculiarities of the chriſtian revelation were the frequent topics of his diſcourſe, its moral precepts were not neglected, but all the duties of chriſtianity were fully explained, and ſtrongly enforced, both by evangelical and rational motives. Though his ſermons did not abound with dry

dry criticiſms, calculated only to diſplay the learning of the preacher, he embraced every opportunity for introducing ſuch judicious and critical obſervations as tended to the explanation and illuſtration of his text, and other paſſages of ſcripture, by which his hearers were both entertained and inſtructed.

Mr. Farmer's manner of delivery was fully equal to his matter, and contributed not a little to recommend it. His voice was clear, pleaſant and harmonious; his addreſs was inſinuating and pathetic. Though he read his diſcourſes, he did it with ſo much propriety, force, and variation of emphaſis and cadence, as well as with ſuch ſuitable pauſes, that he kept up the attention, and frequently touched the paſsions of his audience. His prayers were ſolemn, ſcriptural, and highly devotional, both as to matter and manner; and ſuch as did great credit to the extemporary mode of worſhip practiſed by the diſſenters. They were free from all low expreſsions, vain repetitions, flights of fancy, great ſwelling words of vanity, or any thing that betrayed irreverence

reverence or groſs familiarity. They were ſuch as diſcovered in him, and tended to produce in others, that temper of mind which becomes a ſinful dependent creature addreſsing its Creator and Sovereign. In ſhort, the whole of his public ſervices were calculated to promote a true ſpirit of piety and devotion. Dr. Kippis, whoſe judgment few will diſpute (though his own manner was different) pronounces Mr. Farmer "one of the beſt preachers that have appeared amongſt the proteſtant diſſenters."

It is worthy of obſervation, that he had the ſingular talent of pleaſing perſons of widely different ſentiments; which he did not by artfully diſguiſing his own, with a view to ingratiate himſelf with all parties, as ſome other miniſters of the like deſcription have been accuſed of doing, and none more than his excellent tutor;—a charge equally unjuſt and fooliſh; for ſuch an attempt would defeat its own end, and be ſure to diſguſt intelligent perſons of all parties.—But the means by which Mr. Farmer attained this felicity was, prudently and conſcientiouſly avoiding all unprofitable controverſies,

troverſies, and obnoxious phraſes, which "engender ſtrife;" inſiſting on the grand doctrines of the goſpel in a ſcriptural manner; adapting both his ſubjects and his phraſeology to perſons of evangelical ſentiments, ſo far as was conſiſtent with his own views of truth; and at the ſame time handling every topic in ſo rational and manly a way, and applying all to ſuch practical purpoſes, as to avoid giving offence to thoſe hearers whoſe ideas of ſome diſputable points were different and oppoſite. His pleaſing and ſtriking addreſs, likewiſe, had doubtleſs, no ſmall effect in recommending him as a preacher to very different deſcriptions of hearers, as well as his polite and affable manner of conducting himſelf towards all in private. To which we may add, his pious and edifying converſation with ſerious chriſtians, contributed not a little to conciliate the eſteem of ſome who in certain doctrinal points were much higher in ſentiment than he profeſſed to be. The writer of this well knew a worthy gentleman*

* The late Mr. Robert Lewin, many years Se-

who

who was very tenacious of all the Calviniſtic doctrines, who repeatedly expreſſed the higheſt veneration for Mr. Farmer's character on this account; declaring that in ſome of his viſits, his converſation was ſo ſpiritual and heavenly, as to elevate his mind beyond what he had on any other occaſion experienced.

The effects of Mr. Farmer's popularity were viſible in the increaſe of his congregation (which was but ſmall when he undertook the charge of it) and in the conſequent enlargement of his place of worſhip; as alſo in the growing population of the village, to which many of the genteel and opulent claſs of diſſenters reſorted, and in the ſummer ſeaſon eſpecially had country houſes or lodgings, chiefly for the ſake of attending his miniſtry. Not leſs than between twenty and thirty gentlemen's carriages have been ſeen at the doors of his meeting-houſe.

cretary of the Bank, and a member and deacon of the Independent Church of Hackney; a gentleman diſtinguiſhed by his ſtrong ſenſe and inflexible integrity, who died at the age of 81. The writer of this will ever retain a pleaſing remembrance of his friendſhip.

But while he captivated the rich and well educated, he by no means diſqualified himſelf for being acceptable and uſeful among the poor and illiterate; by many of whom he was equally valued, as his diſcourſes were for the moſt part ſufficiently plain to be underſtood by attentive hearers of ordinary capacities, perhaps more ſo than ſome compoſed in a much inferior ſtile, and in reſpect to matter alſo more edifying.

For many years Mr. Farmer preached to his congregation at Walthamſtow both parts of the Lord's day. But at length, an able aſſociate being provided for him, he relinquiſhed the afternoon ſervice. He did not, however, long continue unemployed on that part of the day; for in the year 1761 he accepted an invitation to become the afternoon preacher at Salters Hall, upon a vacancy occaſioned by Mr. Spilſbury's being choſen to ſucceed Mr. Barker in the morning as paſtor of the church. His firſt ſermon at this place was on Col. i. 28. and well adapted to the occaſion, as ſome yet living, who heard it, can teſtify. In this ſituation Mr. Farmer's ſervices

proved highly acceptable, ſo that he had (with one exception*) the largeſt afternoon audience of any among the Preſbyterians; for ſo that congregation was denominated, though Mr. Farmer himſelf ranked with the Independents to the laſt, as alſo did his friend Dr. FURNEAUX†, who aſſiſted once a fortnight at a Sunday evening lecture in the ſame place.

Sometime afterwards Mr. Farmer was choſen one of the *Salters Hall* lecturers on the Tueſday morning; an office which was uſed to be conſidered as a diſtinguiſhed honour, conferred on the moſt reſpectable miniſters in or near the metropolis; being ſupported and frequented by ſome of the chief merchants in the city, and therefore called "The Merchant's Lecture."—Here Mr. Farmer was well attended, and generally by a number of his brethren; but this lecture had at that time begun to

* Dr. JAMES FORDYCE.

† Miniſter at Clapham: a man of fine abilities and extenſive learning; author of the admirable "Letters to Judge Blackiſton," on the Teſt Act.

decline,

decline, and at length became extinct, though not for ſome years after he reſigned his concern in it.

Mr. Farmer's character, learning and talents, procured him other marks of diſtinction* among the Diſſenters (who have indeed but few to beſtow) which extended the ſphere of his uſefulneſs.

He was choſen one of the truſtees of Dr. DANIEL WILLIAMS's extenſive charities, and likewiſe one of Mr. COWARD's (his firſt patron) the object of whoſe bequeſt was "the promoting of the intereſt of Chriſt among the proteſtant diſſenters," particularly by the education of miniſters in two academies, the one of which at that time was at HOXTON and the other at DAVENTRY. In both theſe capacities Mr. Farmer

* It may probably be matter of ſurpriſe to ſome, that Mr. Farmer ſhould not have received ſome diplomatic diſtinction. This doubtleſs he might have had as eaſily as ſome of his brethren, but he had not this kind of ambition; and he had ſeen ſo many titles conferred on thoſe who had no appearance of a juſt claim to ſuch marks of pre-eminence, that he probably thought it beneath him to accept of any.

exerted his abilities with prudence and zeal, much to the ſatisfaction of thoſe who were aſſociated with him; excepting that ſometimes, through an exceſs of complaiſance, he was for putting upon others ſome ſervices for which they thought him the beſt qualified. When he could be prevailed upon to addreſs the ſtudents for the miniſtry, he fixed their attention, and left upon their minds deep impreſsions, calculated to produce happy effects, and which many of them recollected with pleaſure in after years.

As Mr. Farmer advanced in life, he gradually remitted of his employment as a preacher. In the year 1772 he reſigned his afternoon ſervice at Salters Hall, and in 1780, his lectureſhip on the Tueſday at the ſame place. In the paſtoral relation to his church at Walthamſtow, he continued for a few years longer, and when he reſigned it, he quitted the pulpit intirely, much to the regret of his people there, and of many others

others of his friends; not indeed without the cenſures of ſome, as he ſtill retained his mental faculties, and his powers of addreſs in their full vigour. But he himſelf judged otherwiſe, and thought that ſome miniſters continued the exerciſe of their public function too long; a fault which, however common, he was unneceſſarily ſolicitous to avoid, through an exceſs of delicacy, and perhaps a culpable fear of falling ſhort of himſelf. His entire reſignation however, took place ſomewhat earlier than it would have done (as he was known afterwards to intimate) if his people had choſen him a proper aſſiſtant, inſtead of a mere afternoon preacher, who might have been called upon to fill his place in the morning, when he himſelf was incapable of doing it, by reaſon of his frequent indiſpoſition. The want of ſuch aſſiſtance, (which doubtleſs his friends would have procured, if he had freely opened to them his mind) often occaſioned him much anxiety, and no ſmall trouble in providing a ſubſtitute, when he found himſelf ſuddenly attacked with the gout, to which, in the latter

latter part of his life, he was much ſubject.

After he had reſigned his paſtoral charge, he uſed to ſpend a part of the winter at Bath, the waters of which he found to be ſalutary. He had formerly ſuffered greatly from that common ſcourge of ſtudious and ſedentary men, the ſtone, but had been twice happily recovered by a very ſimple medicine*, from that dreadful diſorder, ſo that he was able with eaſe to ride on horſeback, which healthful exerciſe he continued to uſe till within a ſhort time of his death.

His eye-ſight had for ſome time been growing dim, and he began to be apprehenſive that he ſhould be totally blind, as his father was, ſome years before his death.

* In hope that others may experience the benefit of this recipe, it is here given as the writer had it from Mr. Farmer:—"Half a pint of decoction of the root liquorice, the bark peeled off, cut in ſlices, gently ſimmered in an earthen veſſel, in ſoft water, and taken an hour or two before breakfaſt." After being cured, he was adviſed never to leave it off; but venturing to do ſo after ſome years, the diſorder returned, and on repeating the remedy it ſucceeded a ſecond time.

Early

Early in the year 1785, cataracts were formed in both his eyes, ſo that he was unable to read any thing; and therefore employed a perſon to read to him. At length, though turned of ſeventy years, he with fortitude ſubmitted to the operation of couching, which was performed by Baron Wenzel and his friend Dr. Wathen; which proved ſo ſucceſsful, that he was afterwards able to purſue his wonted courſe of ſtudy.

In conſequence of having lived many years at a ſmall expence, and having received conſiderable legacies from his deceaſed friends, as well as liberal contributions from his congregation, Mr. Farmer had acquired ſo much property as placed him in eaſy circumſtances, ſo that for ſome years before his death he kept houſe and a handſome table, at which he entertained his friends with liberality. In the latter part of his life, and more eſpecially after the failure of his ſight, he was particularly happy to enjoy the ſociety of a few of his brethren, who could give him ſome account of what was paſsing in the literary world; and the rather as the number of his acquaintance

acquaintance at Walthamſtow, after he had quitted his miniſtry, was conſiderably diminiſhed. And they always found their account in giving him their company, as they received from him more than they were able to communicate.

Mr. Farmer continued to retain his mental faculties, and his capacity for converſation, in full vigour; and he poſſeſſed a tolerable ſhare of health, as well as a fine flow of ſpirits, till he was ſeized with the gout in the ſtomach, which was ſuppoſed to be occaſioned by eating ſomething too cold at the table of a friend; and this ſpeedily brought on his diſſolution, which took place on the 5th of February, 1787, when he was in the ſeventy-third year of his age.

His deportment in the cloſing ſcene was ſuch as became a great and good man, a true chriſtian, and a miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt: his language to thoſe about him manifeſting the moſt entire reſignation, and the deepeſt humility, as well as a lively faith in the promiſes of the goſpel, and a cheerful hope of a bleſſed immortality.

Agreeably to his direction in his will,

he was buried in Walthamſtow church-yard, in the ſame grave with his valuable friends Mr. and Mrs. Snell.

On the Lord's day, the eighteenth of the ſame month, his funeral ſermon was preached, at the requeſt of his executors, by Mr. Urwick, of Clapham, and by the general deſire of his friends it was printed. The text was, Luke xiii. 29.—"*And they ſhall come from the eaſt and from the weſt, and from the north and from the ſouth, and ſhall ſit down in the kingdom of God.*" — This diſcourſe, the whole of which is excellent, contains a juſt view of Mr. Farmer's character, without any laboured panegyric. An extract from it will not improperly be given at the cloſe of theſe memoirs.

Mr. Farmer made a kind and prudent diſpoſal of the property which he left behind him, and which, if he had been parſimonious, he might eaſily have increaſed. In his will he provided handſomely for his few

few relations, and left legacies to his ſervants. He bequeathed a hundred pounds to the Fund for the Widows of poor diſſenting Miniſters, and forty pounds to the poor of Walthamſtow pariſh. He likewiſe teſtified his regard to the family with which he had been ſo long connected, and to which he thought himſelf ſo much indebted, by a pecuniary legacy to every member of it. He alſo left ſmaller ones to ſeveral of his friends.

His executors, to whom he bequeathed a hundred pounds each, were WILLIAM SNELL, Eſq. of Clapham, and WILLIAM HOOD, Eſq. of Chancery-lane, barriſter; the former the ſon, and the latter the grandſon, of his great friend and patron. To another grandſon, the Rev. Robert Jacomb, then minister at Salters Hall, he bequeathed his library, with the exception of ſuch claſsical books as Mr. Snell might ſelect; who was alſo a reſiduary legatee, in conjunction with his ſiſter, Mrs. Hood.

There was one ſingular article in Mr. Farmer's will, which cannot be mentioned without deep regret, nor indeed without

ſome degree of cenſure. He made it his *requeſt* that his executors would burn all his manuſcripts, unleſs he ſhould direct otherwiſe by a ſeparate paper; but the more effectually to engage their compliance, he ordered, that unleſs it ſhould be done, the legacies which he had left them ſhould be null and void. Accordingly, ALL HIS PAPERS WERE BURNT! They who knew Mr. Farmer as a preacher, could not but lament that ſo many admirable diſcourſes, which he had compoſed with ſo much care and accuracy, ſhould be committed to the flames, out of which many might have been ſelected, and preſented to the public, which would have done great credit to the author, and highly gratified and inſtructed numbers of readers. Nor can thoſe who are acquainted with his works which he himſelf publiſhed, avoid feeling a painful concern that ſeveral other elaborate and learned performances which he had actually prepared for the preſs, ſhould have been doomed to the ſame fate.

One of theſe was, "A ſecond volume on the Demonology of the Ancients," which he had nearly completed. Another was a curious "Diſſertation on the ſtory of

of Balaam," which had lain by him ſeveral years, fairly tranſcribed for the preſs, and for the printing of which he had actually made preparation. This work he had ſubmitted to the inſpection of his friends, Dr. Kippis and Michael Dodſon, Eſq. to whom he had imparted his deſign of publiſhing it; both of whom concurred in their opinion of its high value, and the loſs of the public in its deſtruction. He had likewiſe prepared a new edition of his "Diſſertation on Miracles," with conſiderable improvements and additions, for the further illuſtration and defence of the general doctrine maintained in that work, which had been long out of print; and for anſwering the objections which had been urged againſt it. For the printing of this he had actually given directions.

It is not to be ſuppoſed, nor is it inſinuated, that, in the deſtruction of theſe valuable performances, "his executors could be influenced by the forfeiture which they would have incurred by preſerving any of them, ſince both their fortunes and their characters placed them above ſo trifling a conſideration."

conſideration." Their conduct is doubtleſs to be ſolely aſcribed to a ſcrupulous regard to what they apprehended to be the will of the deceaſed. But many will think, with the worthy author of his life in the Biographia Britannica, "that they carried their ſcrupuloſity to an exceſs," becauſe it evidently appears, from the circumſtances juſt now mentioned, that the author himſelf deſigned to favour the public with the two laſt of theſe performances, at leaſt; and that had not his death prevented, they would actually have been in the preſs. It might eaſily have been ſuppoſed that his ſudden and ſevere illneſs might prevent his writing any thing to ſignify his wiſh to have them printed; or rather that he might think this unneceſſary, after the preparation he had made for their publication.

But whatever degree of blame may attach to his executors in this matter, it muſt be confeſſed that a much heavier cenſure falls upon Mr. Farmer himſelf, in ordering *any* of the valuable productions of his pen to be deſtroyed, without ſubmitting them, (as ſome

ſome other learned men* have done) to the inſpection of ſome judicious friends, intruſted with a diſcretionary power. In this, and in ſome other inſtances, it muſt be allowed that this great man diſcovered too delicate a regard to his own reputation, leſt it ſhould ſuffer in the eſtimation of faſtidious readers, from any little inaccuracy or inadvertency which might have eſcaped him. It is alſo known that he diſcovered ſome degree of chagrin that his laſt publication did not find ſo rapid a ſale as he expected, though the merit of it was duly appreciated by perſons qualified to judge on ſuch ſubjects, and who have a reliſh for ſuch diſquiſitions, the number of whom is comparatively but ſmall.

The extreme nicety of his taſte, which perhaps was not without ſome degree of literary pride, though under the appearance of humility, prevented this able writer from complying with the requeſt of ſeveral of his friends, to publiſh ſome of his devotional and practical performances, or even to indulge them with a peruſal of his

* Dr. Doddridge, Dr. Kennicot, Mr. Job Orton, &c.

manuſcripts.

manuſcripts. This was the caſe with regard to the only miniſterial charge that he could ever be prevailed upon to deliver, though eſteemed by his audience one of the beſt they ever heard*.

Theſe were foibles unworthy of ſuch a character; to which impartiality obliges us to add the mention of another; which was too great a reſervedneſs of temper, even towards his moſt intimate friends, in expreſsing his ſentiments "on recent publications and living authors†;" as alſo on ſome much controverted points of theology. It was not unuſual with him, when a queſtion was aſked him on ſuch topics, inſtead of giving a direct anſwer to propoſe another. This habit doubtleſs aroſe from a ſettled and juſt averſion to theological controverſy, as generally unprofitable, and often injurious.

* It was delivered at the ordination of the Rev. Thomas Tayler, at Carter-lane.

† So Dr. Kippis expreſſes himſelf, which might be partly true; and yet the writer of this has ſometimes heard Mr. Farmer ſpeak in ſtrong terms of cenſure, concerning certain modern publications, and particularly ſome of Dr. Prieſtley's.

But

But conſiſtently with this, he might have explicitly ſtated his own views, to thoſe who wiſhed to know them for the ſake of information, where he was fully decided; and wherein he was not, he might without diſhonour have avowed his uncertainty.

This exceſs of prudent caution may have led ſome to ſuſpect that his views of ſome important doctrines were more obnoxious than many of his friends and admirers ſuppoſed them to be; and may have led others of contrary ſentiments, to conſider him as being of their own party, and to cenſure him for want of courage in not avowing it; particularly in regard to the Unitarian controverſy, on which he was the moſt reſerved. Though candour requires us to ſuppoſe that a man of Mr. Farmer's general excellence of character had reaſons, which his own conſcience approved, in refraining from an explicit declaration of his opinion on ſubjects which have occaſioned ſo much angry debate, yet it is not eaſy fully to juſtify him to the ſatisfaction of

of ſuch as have condemned this part of his conduct*.

* On this head a learned and worthy correſpondent who peruſed theſe papers, and who knew Mr. Farmer well, writes as follows:—"It was in my opinion, and in that of many candid perſons, a blameable part in good Mr. Farmer's conduct, that neither his people, nor his friends in the freedom of converſation, ever learned his own views. This conduct appears not perfectly conſiſtent with the ſimplicity and ſincerity which the preacher of the goſpel ſhould exemplify: it was not *declaring the whole counſel of God*; nor was it ſuited to correct error and enlighten the mind. It indicated (with all deference to his excellencies I would ſay it) timidity, and an exceſs of worldly prudence; cautious of alarming prejudice, and creating obloquy."—And yet it muſt be acknowledged that Mr. Farmer diſcovered courage and openneſs ſufficient in his writings upon *other* topics, whereby he created *obloquy* in abundance. All that can be ſaid in excuſe for his reſervedneſs upon the ſubjects above referred to, ſeems to be, that he did not ſee an explicit ſtatement of his own views concerning them to be of any great importance, and that he thought that general mode of expreſſion relating to them, which beſt accords with ſcripture language, in the uſe of which chriſtians can beſt agree, tends moſt to edification.

It is moreover poſſible that Mr. Farmer might be of opinion with thoſe who think, that on ſubjects which are confeſſedly myſterious, attempting a minute explanation is "darkening counſel by words without knowledge,"

It is hoped that it will not be thought inconſiſtent with a very high eſteem for Mr. Farmer's character further to allow, that his temper was too irritable, and that he felt too tenderly the cenſures of his opponents, even thoſe whoſe judgments he affected to deſpiſe. This is manifeſt in his anſwers to ſome of them, and his friends, upon particular occaſions, witneſſed it in converſation. Perhaps alſo it may be admitted that, on the other hand, his politeneſs and complaiſance in company ſometimes led him to an exceſs of compliment. The candid Dr. Kippis, who had a ſtrong partiality for Mr. Farmer, freely mentions theſe particulars as matters of cenſure. But what human character is free from blemiſh? The

and that in every thing of eſſential importance in ſuch doctrines, chriſtians are more nearly agreed than they are ready to imagine: that their diſagreement is more about *words* than *things*, and that ſo far as they have clear ideas, and as real devotion and practical religion are concerned, they are in the main united. Some thoughts on this head worthy of a ſerious attention, may be ſeen in Mr. FAWCETT's "Candid Reflections," and in a vindication of the ſame, entitled "Chriſtian Catholiciſm defended."

ſun has his ſpots, and men who have advanced the neareſt towards perfection, have ſhewn that they were *but* men.

Notwithſtanding Mr. Farmer's defects, which have been thus impartially noticed*, he was undeniably a man of diſtinguiſhed excellence, who, on the whole, may be ſaid to have had few equals among perſons of his own profeſſion. Beſides what was before ſaid of him as a chriſtian miniſter, it muſt be added, that his private character and general deportment were ſuch as ſecured the high veneration and eſteem of all who had the happineſs of his acquaintance. His manners were thoſe of a polite and well-bred gentleman; and if at any time he had occaſion to ſhew his diſpleaſure, he never ſuffered himſelf to ſpeak or act beneath that

* "We muſt confeſs the faults of our favourite, to gain credit for our praiſe of his excellencies. He that claims, either for himſelf or another, the honours of perfection, will ſurely injure the reputation which he deſigns to ſupport." Dr. JOHNSON.

character. Though ſo ſevere a ſtudent, and ſo profound a ſcholar, he diſcovered nothing of ſtiffneſs or formality, but was perfectly free and affable in all companies; and when among his intimate friends, eſpecially young perſons and the female ſex, he was generally facetious and jocular, though he always maintained the dignity of his character as a miniſter. His knowledge of the world, as well as of books, the vivacity of his temper, the readineſs of his wit, his pleaſing addreſs, and his agreeable enunciation, rendered his ſociety delightful.

He was very kind and condeſcending to young miniſters who ſought his acquaintance, and when they could engage him in ſome favourite ſubject of converſation, they found themſelves equally entertained and inſtructed. He was ſo much a maſter of the ſubjects he had ſtudied, and had words ſo greatly at command, that he would frequently hold on ſpeaking, for a conſiderable length, on a particular point of literature with ſuch fluency and accuracy, that it appeared (had he not uſually

ſhut

ſhut his eyes) as if he was reading from a printed book.

Among the advices which he gave to younger miniſters, the following may be worth recording. Having aſked one of them how many ſermons he had compoſed, and being told about five hundred, he expreſſed ſome ſurpriſe, and ſaid to him, "Let me adviſe you, before you make any more, to make theſe over again; it will be better both for yourſelf and your hearers."* — In converſation with another on ſcripture critics, Mr. Farmer aſked him whether he had *Grotius*, and being anſwered in the negative, he replied, "Then ſell all your commentators and buy Grotius." — Another piece of advice which he ſometimes gave was, "never

* It is certain that many young diſſenting miniſters compoſe more ſermons than is conſiſtent with accuracy, or with due application to reading, and thoſe other ſtudies which are of importance to their general qualification for their office. If the above advice ſhould not be thought proper to be literally followed, it will be allowed by judicious perſons to ſuggeſt a hint that may be very uſefully applied. Sermons well ſtudied will furniſh even more *variety* than double the number of haſty ſuperficial compoſitions.

to

to raiſe a difficulty without being able to ſolve it."

Mr. Farmer poſſeſſed great generoſity of temper, and in his diſtribution to charitable deſigns and neceſsitous objects, it was ſuppoſed that he went to the utmoſt extent of his circumſtances. His prudent liberality towards his brother Mr. JOHN FARMER, is worthy of particular notice; and the rather as his ſtudied privacy in this matter occaſioned ſome perſons to reflect upon him as deficient in fraternal kindneſs. That gentleman, who was a diſſenting miniſter, of ſtrict Calviniſtical ſentiments, had been, in conſequence of ſome little mental derangement, for ſome years incapable of any ſtated miniſterial ſervice, and was in a great meaſure dependent upon the benevolence of his friends for his ſubſiſtence. Mr. Hugh Farmer was ever ready to aſsiſt him, but through ſome obliquity of temper, he refuſed to be knowingly indebted to his brother for ſuch aſsiſtance. He therefore kindly conveyed his benevolence to him through the medium of one of his friends, ſo that he had no ſuſpicion from whence it came.

If

If the warmth of Mr. Farmer's temper occaſionally led him into any impropriety of ſpeech, it afterwards gave him great concern, and he ſhewed himſelf ready to make every proper conceſsion, in order to prevent a breach of friendſhip. His candour towards perſons of different ſentiments and parties in religion, was very extenſive and impartial. Bigotry was what he abhorred in others, and he was at the greateſt diſtance from it himſelf.

Though he was a Proteſtant Diſſenter from conviction, and by no means indifferent to the ſupport of his principles as ſuch, he manifeſted the utmoſt candour towards worthy men and miniſters of the eſtabliſhed church. With ſome of the latter he held a correſpondence; among whom is to be mentioned with diſtinguiſhed reſpect Dr. NEWCOME, the late learned and worthy Archbiſhop of Armagh, who was pleaſed to expreſs great ſatisfaction in his publications, and preſented to him his own.

Of Mr. Farmer's learning and abilities, his works, which are before the public, will

will afford the beſt evidence, and ſuperſede any encomium. It may not be improper to cloſe this account with the following juſt character of him, extracted from the diſcourſe addreſsed to his congregation upon occaſion of his deceaſe.

CHARACTER

CHARACTER OF MR. FARMER,

AS GIVEN BY THE

REV. THOMAS URWICK,

IN HIS FUNERAL SERMON.

AFTER a brief account of Mr. Farmer's birth, education, and early ſettlement, Mr. Urwick thus proceeds — "His uncommon natural abilities, engaging manners, and great erudition, would have appeared with much dignity in any ſtation of life—and when theſe powers and accompliſhments were united with a religious temper of mind, they did not fail to diſtinguiſh him as a miniſter of the goſpel; to the important duties of which office he cordially devoted himſelf, and always made his learning and liberal ſtudies inſtrumental to the intereſt of religion.

"But

" But there were ſome peculiar features in his private and public character, which deſerve to be more particularly mentioned, and which I am pleaſed with the opportunity of laying before thoſe who have been for many years eye-witneſſes of them.

" He was lively and brilliant in converſation to an uncommon degree; but always in the ſtyle of a gentleman, and the decorum of a miniſter. No one poſſeſſed more real gravity, upon all occaſions that required it, whether in the pulpit, in the chamber of ſickneſs, with mourning friends, or when engaged upon ſubjects of religion and learning in the converſation of his brethren. In this he bore a ſtrong reſemblance to his amiable tutor. They both poſſeſſed a mental vigour that ſuſtained the labour of cloſe ſtudy and difficult inveſtigation; and yet retained that livelineſs of imagination and flexibility of mind which rendered them highly entertaining in the moſt gay and exhilarating converſation where the mirth was innocent.

" Thoſe

" Thoſe who were acquainted with Mr. Farmer muſt have obſerved, that his natural temper was warm, and that he had a high ſpirit. But it is juſtice to ſay, that whenever theſe led him into any little impropriety of ſpeech or behaviour, he was ſolicitous to make every proper conceſsion afterwards, and ſhewed great uneaſineſs till ſuch offences were quite cleared away. His regular behaviour was in the higheſt degree kind, obliging, and polite. Every man was treated by him with honour, and he was exalted above every thing mean and ſelfiſh.

" He was moſt ſincere and cordial in his friendſhips. He ſaw with a quick eye every kindneſs that was done to him, and readily acknowledged its full value; nor did he ever forget to return ſuch favours whenever he had an opportunity of doing it. He had alſo much generoſity of mind, and upon many occaſions was liberal, far beyond what is uſual in perſons of his moderate fortune. But as this diſpoſition was generally exerted in a private way,

and

and principally to the poor and afflicted, we are ſure the motives that influenced it were good.

" His good underſtanding and acquaintance with the world, delivered him from all religious bigotry. In the freeſt converſation I ever had with him, about ſects and parties of chriſtians, I never heard him utter a ſevere or uncandid thing of any ſet of men whatſoever.

" It is impoſsible for me to do juſtice to Mr. Farmer's abilities as a preacher. His elocution was clear and ſtrong; his manner of addreſs handſome and very inſinuating; and his diſcourſes were well ſtored with the ſerious and practical truths of the goſpel. He was equally fond of uſing the language of the ſacred writings as he was conſcientious in holding up their doctrines to his hearers; and was uſed to ſay, 'that the evangelical language was not only moſt generally acceptable to our hearers, but that which carried the evangelical doctrines with the greateſt force to the heart.'

" He

" He was particularly diſtinguiſhed by the animation with which he delivered his public diſcourſes. Every one ſaw that he felt the ſentiments which he uttered, and his attentive hearers happily experienced that he conveyed his own feelings to them. Through all his public ſervices there was a moſt happy variety of thought and expreſsion, as well as a conſtant flow of lively and humble devotion. — His diſcourſes were peculiarly ornamented and enriched with criticiſms for the explanation of difficult paſſages of ſcripture, or the farther illuſtration of others. Theſe criticiſms were always manly, had evident importance in them, and inſtead of being dry and tedious, they much enlivened his ſermons.

" By theſe means he was always in much eſtimation as a preacher, and had a moſt reſpectable number and claſs of hearers, both in this place, and at Salters Hall. He retained all this excellency to the laſt; and there was an univerſal and very ſincere lamentation

tation upon his reſignation of all public duty; for he was in poſſeſsion of as much popularity as ever he had, when he was induced to take this ſtep by frequent returns of bodily diſorder, and the apprehenſion of the total loſs of ſight.

"The world is in poſſeſsion of thoſe publications which gave abundant proof of Mr. Farmer's abilities and application to ſtudy. The deſign of them was, to eſtabliſh the evidence of the divine authority of the ſcriptures in the cleareſt and moſt ſatisfying manner. He did not live to complete the work, nor do I know that any perſon hath been made acquainted with the [whole] plan of it. What we have ſeen, ſhews him to have been well ſkilled in thoſe languages, and much acquainted with thoſe ancient writings, the knowledge of which is properly called learning; and that he was equal to the laborious and very difficult deſign which he had undertaken. Theſe publications procured him the acquaintance and praiſes of ſeveral perſons of

of eminent learning and dignity, both at home and abroad.

"I am ſorry to add, that he has left the ſtricteſt orders in his will, that his MSS. of every ſort ſhould be burnt without inſpection. He was induced to this by the ſhameful abuſe which is often made of poſthumous writings*; and he had delayed to prepare [*many valuable papers*] for the preſs himſelf, from a deſire to proceed in his greater work.

"With all this learning and character this excellent man was not in any degree oſtentatious and aſſuming. He never carried about him the parade of literature, the pride of ſcience, or the haughtineſs of great ability.

"In Mr. Farmer were united the gentleman, the ſcholar, and the miniſter of the goſpel. It is eaſy to conceive how

* That ſuch abuſe is too common is readily allowed; but this cannot be admitted as a ſufficient reaſon for the deſtruction of ſuch great works as he had himſelf intended, and actually prepared for the preſs.

each

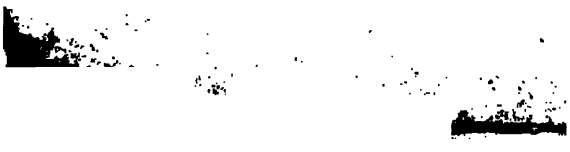
each of theſe would give dignity and value to the other. When we conſider him in his whole character and endowments, we may truly ſay, he was without a ſuperior among us; and, by his death, religion and learning have loſt an able friend and advocate.

" In his laſt illneſs, which was lingering and painful, he ſhewed much patience, and was quite reſigned to the will of God. To a miniſter and friend, who frequently viſited him on that occaſion, he expreſſed his great conſolation from the promiſes of the goſpel, and the covenant of mercy which was ſealed by the blood of Chriſt. He was exceedingly earneſt in the acknowledgement of his own unworthineſs, and his dependence upon the grace of God for acceptance and reward. His frequent expreſſions were, " That he had been a very ' unprofitable ſervant:' that he was an unworthy creature: that he was ' the leaſt of all ſaints," &c.

Mr.

Mr. Urwick properly adds, "There is much foundation for ſuch expreſsions as theſe from us all. The greateſt and beſt human characters are unworthy in the ſight of God. Humility is a moſt becoming temper, when we are going to appear before his tribunal, and we muſt always 'look for the mercy of our Lord 'Jeſus Chriſt unto eternal life."*

* Jude, ver. 21.



A LIST AND ANALYSIS

OF ALL

MR. FARMER'S PUBLICATIONS:

Chiefly extracted from the Biographia Britannica, with occaſional Remarks.

IT is remarkable that Mr. Farmer never printed more than one SERMON, which was "preached at Walthamſtow, on the day of public Thankſgiving, *Oct.* 9, 1746, on the ſuppreſſion of the Rebellion in the year 1745."—The title is, *The duty of thankſgiving and paying our vows made in a time of trouble, explained and enforced.* The text PSAL. l. 14. 'Offer unto God thankſgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Moſt High.' —It is a good and well compoſed diſcourſe, full of loyalty and devotion; but being written at ſo early a period, it ought not to be conſidered by the few that may poſſeſs it, as a ſpecimen, though a very promiſing omen, of the author's preaching in his maturer years.

He produced no other publication till the year 1761, when he printed "An Inquiry into the Nature and Deſign of Chriſt's temptation in the Wilderneſs."——The general object of this work is to ſhew, That this part of the evangelical hiſtory is not only to be underſtood as the recital of a viſionary repreſentation, but that the whole

of it was a DIVINE VISION, premonitory of the labours and difficulties of our Lord's public miniſtry, on which he was then about to enter.

An interpretation ſo *new* and *ſingular** (Dr. Kippis ſays) was not likely to paſs unnoticed. Accordingly the next year there appeared an anonymous anſwer to it, entitled, "Chriſt's Temptations real Facts; or a Defence of the evangelical Hiſtory, &c." A work which, according to the opinion of able judges, abounded more in learning than judgment.

A ſecond edition of Mr. Farmer's "Inquiry," being ſoon called for, he ſubjoined a number of notes, in which the ſubject received additional illuſtration.

* Though no diſtinct treatiſe had been publiſhed on this view of the ſubject, it ſhould not be omitted here, that Mr. MASON, of Cheſhunt, the author of the excellent piece on *Self-knowledge*, claimed the thought as his own, which he had illuſtrated in one of his printed ſermons; and in the hearing of the writer of this, cenſured Mr. Farmer, for not having made a reference to it.

This ſermon of Mr. *Maſon*, on Chriſt's temptation, is found in a Collection, entitled "The Proteſtant Syſtem," vol. II. p. 307. But the attentive reader of that diſcourſe will find that Mr. *Maſon*'s cenſure was not well founded, ſince though he and Mr. Farmer conſidered the whole of the temptation as viſionary, Mr. Farmer repreſented it as a viſion from the divine Spirit, whereas Mr. Maſon ſuppoſed it to be the effect of the influence which the devil was permitted to have on Chriſt's imagination.

This eſſential difference between Mr. Maſon's ſcheme and his own, Mr. Farmer has pointed out in his ſecond and third editions of the eſſay; ſee note to § II. where he alſo proves that *Le Clerc* had been falſely ſuppoſed to have maintained the ſame opinion with his.

In

In 1764, he publiſhed "An Appendix to the Inquiry," containing ſome further obſervations on the point in debate, and an anſwer to the objections which had been urged againſt his ſcheme.

A third edition of the "Inquiry" appeared ſome time afterwards, without any date, in which the author inſerted ſeveral further additions, and particularly in the third ſection, to confirm his hypotheſis of Chriſt's being *led* into the wilderness *in* or *by the Spirit*—This firſt work of our author was only a prelude to more extenſive deſigns which he had formed.

In 1771, he publiſhed "A Diſſertation on Miracles," in a large octavo volume, deſigned to ſhew "that they are arguments of a divine interpoſition, and abſolute proofs of the miſſion of a prophet."—This was characteriſed in the Monthly Review, as "one of thoſe ſubſtantial and durable treatiſes that will always be conſidered as valuable and important acquiſitions to the cauſe of ſacred literature."—In the preface to this work, the author gives this account of it. "What is attempted in the following ſheets, is to refute thoſe principles of demoniſm which have done ſo much diſcredit to the argument drawn from miracles in favour of the Jewiſh and Chriſtian revelations. Without entering into the peculiar nature and circumſtances of the ſcripture miracles, I conſider only the general queſtion, whether miracles are in themſelves evidences of a divine interpoſition, and conſequently, when properly applied, contain proofs of the divine original of a ſupernatural revelation. Nor is it merely the credit of revelation that is concerned in the preſent queſtion, but the honour alſo of the general adminiſtration

miniſtration of divine providence, and the common intereſt of piety and virtue."

The work opens, CHAP. I. with ſome preliminary conſiderations.—§ 1. The nature of miracles is explained and ſhewn to conſiſt in their contrariety to thoſe general rules by which the viſible world is governed, or the common courſe of events in it.—§ 2. proves that miracles are not impoſſible to the power of God; nor repugnant to our ideas of his wiſdom and immutability; that they do not imply any inconſiſtency in the divine conduct, or any defect or diſturbance of the laws of nature.—§ 3. examines the different cauſes to which miracles have been aſcribed; and at the cloſe, the author thus ſtates his own ſcheme:—"That they are always to be aſcribed to a divine interpoſition, being never wrought but either immediately by GOD himſelf, or by ſuch other beings as he commiſſions and empowers to perform them."

CHAP. II. contains arguments from reaſon to prove, that miracles are never effected without a divine interpoſition.—§ 1. ſhews that the ſame conſiderations which manifeſt the exiſtence of created intelligences do much more ſtrongly conclude againſt their acting out of their proper ſphere.—§ 2. that there is no proper evidence of the truth of any miracle, but ſuch as may fitly be aſcribed to the Deity. All the facts appealed to in proof of the miraculous agency of evil ſpirits are either not ſupernatural, or not real.—§ 3. that as the laws of nature are ordained by GOD, and eſſential to the order and happineſs of the world, it is impoſſible he ſhould delegate to any of his creatures a power of working miracles (at their pleaſure) by which thoſe divine eſtabliſhments may be ſuperſeded and controlled; and § 4. that the aſcribing ſuch a power

power to any beſides GOD, and thoſe immediately commiſſioned by him, ſubverts the foundation of natural piety, and is a fruitful ſource of idolatry and ſuperſtition. § 5. ſhews, that if miracles were performed in proof of falſe doctrine, mankind would be expoſed to frequent and unavoidable deluſion.—§ 6. that on this ſuppoſition miracles could not be authentic credentials of a divine miſſion, and certain criterions of truth.

CHAP. III. Is deſigned to ſhew, that the ſcriptures, both of the Old and New Teſtament, ſtrictly correſponding with right reaſon, always repreſent miracles as the peculiar works of God, and never attribute them to any other beings, unleſs they act by his immediate commiſſion.—§ 1. conſiders the view which the ſcripture gives us of angels, both good and evil, and of the ſouls of departed men, as inconſiſtent with their liberty of working miracles.—§ 2. contains an accurate and curious inquiry into the repreſentation which the ſcripture affords of the nature and claims of the heathen divinities, and proves, by the teſtimony of ancient hiſtorians, poets and philoſophers, and by uncontroverted facts, that the demons of the heathen were not ſpirits of a higher origin than the race of man, but were ſuch departed human ſouls as were believed to have become demons; which ſuppoſition he goes on to confirm from the authority of the Old Teſtament; and conſiders the uſe of the word demon in the Septuagint, in Philo, in Joſephus, and in the New Teſtament.—In § 3. the author examines the character and pretenſions of the magicians, diviners, and ſorcerers of antiquity; ſtates the ſcripture account of them, and refutes the various pleas alledged by chriſtians in favour of the ancient magic.—§ 4. relates to the falſe prophets

prophets ſpoken of in ſcripture, and explains *Deut.* xiii. 1—5. *Mat.* xxiv. 24. and ſeveral paſſages in the epiſtles, particularly Pau's prophecy concerning the *Man of Sin*, all of which he ſhews, intend nothing more than artful tricks to impoſe upon the vulgar.—§ 5. proves that the ſcripture repreſents the ONE TRUE GOD, as the ſole Creator and Sovereign of the world, which he governs by fixed and invariable laws, and that to him they aſcribe miracles as proofs of his divinity and ſole dominion, in oppoſition to the claims of all other beings.—§ 6. ſhews that the ſcripture uniformly repreſents all miracles as being in themſelves an abſolute demonſtration of the divine miſſion and doctrine of the prophets, at whoſe inſtigation, or by whoſe means they are performed, and never directs us to regard their DOCTRINE as the TEST of their MIRACLES, but on the contrary teaches us to judge of the truth of their DOCTRINE by their MIRACLES. So did Jeſus Chriſt himſelf. The meſſiahſhip of Jeſus of Nazareth, is a doctrine which natural reaſon cannot of itſelf diſcover to be either true or falſe. It admits of no other certain proof than the teſtimony of prophecies or miracles.

CHAP. IV. is taken up in ſhewing that miracles, conſidered as divine interpoſitions, are a certain proof of the miſſion and doctrine of a prophet: and in pointing out the advantages and neceſſity of this proof, in confirming and propagating a new revelation. On the whole, "we do not heſitate (ſays his biographer) in pronouncing this to be the moſt important and maſterly performance that has appeared on the ſubject.*"

* A new edition of this work, which has long been wanted, is lately publiſhed, and handſomely printed in 12mo. price only 3s.

Soon

Soon after its publication a notion was propagated that the author had made a conſiderable uſe of Mr. LEMOINE'S treatiſe on the ſame ſubject, and written, it was ſaid, with the ſame view, without any acknowledgement. Mr. Farmer thought it behoved him to vindicate himſelf from the charge of plagiariſm, which he did in a pamphlet publiſhed in 1771, intitled "An examination of the late Rev. Mr. LEMOINE'S Treatiſe on Miracles." In this piece he propoſed to give a particular view of that work, in order to ſhew how much it differs from his own, and is even contrary to it. This he did with great clearneſs and ſucceſs, ſo as to wipe off the foul and malicious aſperſion. Though he owned that he had read the book when it came out, he denied that he had been in any way indebted to it, or that he had reviſed it in publiſhing his own, which had lain by him ſome years before the other appeared; and juſtly obſerved "that he could be under no temptation to borrow from an author whoſe ſentiments he totally diſapproved." He did not, however, ſolely confine himſelf to the defence of his own reputation, but took occaſion ſtill further to confirm and illuſtrate the points which diſtinguiſhed his "Diſſertation on Miracles." With reſpect to the ancient magic, in particular, he added a number of important remarks. Though his accuſer in "The London Magazine" continued with bitterneſs to renew his attacks for ſeveral months, whoſoever compares the two publications will eaſily perceive, that it was the mere effect of reſentment; the origin of which was eaſily accounted for in ſome circumſtances not very honourable to that writer, with which it is not worth while to trouble the public.

In 1775, Mr. Farmer publiſhed another important and elaborate

elaborate work: "An Eſſay on the Demoniacs of the New Teſtament."—The deſign of this was to prove, that the perſons ſaid to be "poſſeſſed of demons," were not really under the influence of evil ſpirits, but afflicted only with ſuch bodily diſorders as had been commonly aſcribed to ſuch influence.

In the proſecution of this deſign, the author lays down the following propoſitions.—That the ſpirits which were thought to take poſſeſſion of mens' bodies, are called in the New Teſtament, not DEVILS but DEMONS—that whenever the word occurs either in ſcripture or other ancient writings, we are not to underſtand by it fallen angels, but pagan deities, ſuch as had once been men:—that thoſe perſons ſpoken of as having demons, ſuffered real and very violent diſorders:—and that the particular diſorders which the ancients, whether Heathens or Jews, aſcribed to the poſſeſſion of demons, were ſuch only as diſturbed the underſtanding:—that the demoniacs ſpoken of in the New Teſtament were all of them either mad-men or epileptics:—that the diſorders imputed to demonaical poſſeſſions were not peculiar to the country of Judea, or to the time of Chriſt; that they abounded no more there, or at that time, than in any other; and that they were not different from thoſe mentioned by other ancient writers:—that reaſon affords no ſufficient ground for ſuppoſing the reality of demonaical poſſeſſions, but ſtrongly remonſtrates againſt it; and that the diſorders ſuppoſed, proceeding from natural cauſes, are cured by natural remedies:—finally, that the doctrine of demonaical poſſeſſions, inſtead of being ſupported by the Jewiſh or Chriſtian revelation, is utterly ſubverted by both.

The next diviſion of this work is employed in ſolving the ſeveral objections which have been urged againſt the author's hypotheſis, which he does with great fairneſs and ingenuity. In the cloſe, he ſtates the inconveniences which attend the common notion of poſſeſſions; and the advantages which reſult from his own view of the ſubject; both of which are repreſented in a ſtriking light.

This work of Mr. Farmer was ſoon attacked by Dr. WORTHINGTON, a reſpectable and learned clergyman, before known by ſome valuable writings, in a piece intitled "An impartial Enquiry into the Caſe of the Goſpel-demoniacs; with an Appendix, conſiſting of an Eſſay on Scripture Demonology." The author neither preſerved his temper, nor added any thing to his literary reputation. Mr. Farmer thought, however, that ſome things which he had advanced deſerved conſideration; and therefore

In 1778 he printed "Letters to the Rev. Dr. WORTHINGTON, in anſwer to his late publication, intitled, &c."—Theſe letters exhibit a clear and judicious epitome of what had already been advanced in the courſe of this controverſy, and contain much more new matter than might have been expected upon a ſubject which the author had already ſo amply diſcuſſed.

But Mr. Farmer had now another antagoniſt to contend with, from whom high expectations were formed by his particular connexions, who were acquainted with his deſign; this was the late Rev. JOHN FELL, at that time miniſter of a diſſenting congregation at Thaxted, in Eſſex, and afterwards one of the tutors of the Independent Academy, at Homerton.

In

In 1779, Mr. Fell publiſhed a pretty large 8vo. volume, intitled "Demoniacs: an Inquiry into the heathen and ſcripture Doctrine of Demons; in which the hypotheſis of the Rev. Mr. Farmer, and others on this ſubject, are particularly conſidered."

"We deny not to Mr. Fell, (ſays Dr. Kippis) the praiſe of ability, acuteneſs, and learning. But we cannot ſpeak with equal commendation of the ſpirit with which his book is written. In particular, we do by means agree with him in his deductions of the injurious conſequences to natural and revealed religion, which he apprehends to reſult from the doctrine advanced in the *Diſſertation* on Miracles, and the *Eſſay* on the Demoniacs. It gave us pleaſure, however, to find Mr. Fell, in one place (p. 337) to expreſs himſelf in the following manner, "Far be it from us to impute any evil deſign to this writer. We doubt not he really meant to ſerve the cauſe of virtue and religion [why not of divine revelation alſo?] which he thought could not be more effectually done than by removing every thing which appeared to him in the light of ſuperſtition." How conſiſtent this declaration was with other parts of this author's writings, will hereafter appear.

Mr. Farmer, (who diſcovered to his friends no ſmall degree of anxiety when he heard of this intended publication) did not think proper, when he had read it, to write a diſtinct reply, for reaſons* which he gave in his next publication on the ſubject, which appeared in the

* The author's reaſons for declining a particular reply to Mr. FELL, may be learned from the following paſſage, in his *Introduction*, p. 46—48. Having mentioned ſome learned authors who differed from him, he adds "There is another writer whom

year 1783, containing five hundred pages, and which was intitled,

"The general prevalence of the worſhip of human

whom I ſhould never have thought of in any connection with theſe, had he not tranſcribed the objections of Dr. *Blackwell*, which he has done without acknowledging his obligation. This gentleman has been pleaſed to honour me with his notice, and to oblige me with an uncommon meaſure of abuſe. With equal candour and penetration he compliments me with ſiniſter motives and diſguiſed infidelity. His cenſures may do me credit; moſt certainly they diſgrace none but himſelf. They diſcover to the world what ſpirit he is of, and what opinion he entertains of his own cauſe, which he could not ſupport without the aid of calumny. There is another circumſtance which ſerves to ſhew his diſtreſs; his continually perverting my language, and miſrepreſenting my ſentiments ſo groſsly, that I ſhould have often been at a loſs againſt whom his performance was written, had he not informed us.

"Whether his miſrepreſentations are wilful or not, let others form what judgment they pleaſe: I barely ſtate the facts. The account he has given, not only of *my* ſentiments, but even of thoſe of the moſt reſpectable writers of antiquity, is ſo very remote from the truth, that, to whatever cauſe it is to be aſcribed, I determined from the firſt never to write any thing *merely* in anſwer to *him*. Such anſwer muſt have entirely conſiſted in ſhewing that he either could not or would not underſtand the plaineſt language; an undertaking which could yield neither pleaſure nor benefit to the reader. Nevertheleſs, when I had reſolved on reaſons which had no relation to this gentleman, to lay before the public my view of the heathen gods, I judged it not improper to point out his errors upon this ſubject, in order to furniſh a *ſpecimen* of his manner of writing, without which it would have appeared incredible that any one could write in the manner he has done"

The above paſſage is the rather inſerted, as it may ſerve to juſtify Mr. Farmer in declining any other notice of Mr. Fell's laſt publication, than what he took in the paper annexed to theſe

Memoir

ſpirits in ancient heathen nations aſſerted and proved." ——In a long introduction he ſhews, that a critical knowledge of this ſubject may anſwer many valuable purpoſes; particularly to impreſs us with a juſt ſenſe of the high importance of the Jewiſh and Chriſtian diſpenſations, and the peculiar propriety of thoſe extraordinary means which were employed to accompliſh our deliverance from Idolatry.

CHAP. I. He endeavours to prove, by the teſtimonies of heathens themſelves, that in the nations ſtiled barbarous, or that were in an unciviliſed ſtate, religious honours were paid to dead men.

CHAP. II. abounds with authorities to ſhew that the caſe was the ſame amongſt the moſt poliſhed nations.

CHAP. III. offers reaſons of a more general nature, viz. thoſe which are drawn from the teſtimonies of the ancients, heathen poets, philoſophers, hiſtorians, and Chriſtian Fathers: alſo from uncontroverted facts, ſuch as monuments and inſtitutions, deſigned to perpetuate the heroes who became the objects of pagan worſhip; ſepulchres, temples, altars, pyramids, ſtatues, ſacrifices, games, feſtivals, and other appendages of ſuperſtition and idolatry. His argument goes to prove, not only that human ſpirits were generally worſhipped among the heathens, but that ſuch ſpirits *alone*, with a few exceptions, were, in the nations with which we are acquainted, the direct and immediate objects of the eſtabliſhed worſhip.

This work, though it reflects great honour upon

Memoirs, which farther illuſtrates Mr. Fell's former manner of writing, and plainly diſcovers that he had made conſiderable improvements in it.

the

the author's abilities and learning, did not meet with ſo rapid a ſale as his former publications, being conſidered as more dry and unintereſting, and many of his readers being ſatisfied with what they had already ſeen on this ſubject. Some of his friends alſo thought that his manner of treating his laſt opponent was reprehenſible. Though he profeſſed not to anſwer Mr. Fell's book, he inſerted ſeveral notes upon particular paſſages in it, which plainly ſhewed his ſenſibility to the attacks made upon him by that writer. "Indeed (ſays the truly candid Dr. Kippis) we cannot approve of the oblique manner in which ſome of theſe notes are compoſed. It would have been far preferable in our author, either not to have taken any notice of Mr. Fell at all, or to have done it in a more open and manly way."

Mr. Fell was not backward to defend himſelf, and to retaliate upon his antagoniſt. In 1785 he publiſhed "The Idolatry of Greece and Rome diſtinguiſhed from that of other heathen nations; in a Letter to the Rev. Hugh Farmer."——"At the ſame time (continues Dr. Kippis) that in this tract ample retaliation is made upon Mr. Farmer, for his perſonal ſeverities, it appears to us to contain many things which (if he had continued to publiſh on the ſubject) would have been found deſerving of conſideration and reply."

The Doctor adds, "Here cloſes our account of Mr. Farmer as an author; for though he purſued his literary inquiries, and employed himſelf in compoſition, nothing produced by him ever did, or EVER CAN, make its public appearance."

The compiler of theſe Memoirs is happy to ſay, that the *laſt* aſſertion of the worthy Doctor is not founded in fact, and aroſe from his not recollecting what

what he had certainly been told, that Mr. Farmer had drawn up ſome brief REMARKS upon Mr. Fell's laſt publication; in which he moſt ſatisfactorily juſtifies himſelf againſt the ſevere and injurious charges of his irritable and much irritated opponent; particularly by proving that he had dealt unfairly in regard to many of his quotations from his writings, and made him to ſpeak a language not only different from, but contrary to what he had actually uſed.

Of this paper, an exact copy is now preſented to the public, with an account of the way in which the editor became poſſeſſed of it, and ſome other circumſtances relating to it.

REMARKS

REMARKS

ON SOME PASSAGES IN

MR. FELL'S LETTER TO MR. FARMER,

ENTITLED THE

IDOLATRY OF GREECE AND ROME,

DISTINGUISHED

FROM THAT OF OTHER NATIONS.

DRAWN UP

BY MR. FARMER,

AND

PUBLISHED FROM HIS MANUSCRIPT.

Impedit ira animum, ne possit cernere verum.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following REMARKS on Mr. FELL's laſt publication, were drawn up by Mr. FARMER, and a ſhort time before his death, were put into the hands of a friend, with a deſire that he would publiſh them in whatever form he pleaſed, only wiſhing himſelf not to appear any further in a controverſy with that angry writer, and deſiring nothing more than to have his character vindicated from the injurious charges brought againſt him, particularly as a diſguiſed enemy to divine revelation.

Mr. Farmer at the ſame time made him a preſent of his own works, with a

requeſt that he and another friend* would take the trouble of examining the references to them, as well as to Mr. Fell's performance, in order to aſcertain the accuracy of them, which they accordingly

* The late Mr. BAXTER COLE, the editor of Dr. LARDNER's Works: well known as a man of great learning, indefatigable induſtry, uncommon accuracy, and inflexible integrity. He had formerly been a teacher of the claſſics in a ſchool at Peckham, and was for ſeveral years aſſiſtant to the Rev. Mr. Towle, but latterly preached only occaſionally.

To preclude all ſuſpicion with regard to the authenticity of the following tract, or the right of any one to print it, after Mr. Farmer had ordered all his papers to be deſtroyed, it may be proper to inform the public, that the perſon to whom he had committed this manuſcript, was Mr. PALMER, of Hackney, to whom he voluntarily brought it, for the purpoſe above related, a very ſhort time before his laſt illneſs, and who could not conſider himſelf as at all concerned in Mr. Farmer's order to his executors in his will, or in the leaſt accountable to any perſon whatever.

did

did, when together, and found them perfectly correct.

Not having brought forward this paper in any form before Mr. Farmer's deceaſe, the editor ſuppreſſed the publication, in conſequence of Mr. Fell's having come to reſide in his neighbourhood, and from an unwillingneſs to give him any offence, which might prevent the friendly acquaintance which he wiſhed to maintain with him.

After two or three agreeable interviews, he took occaſion to inform Mr. Fell, that he had ſuch a paper in his hands, and offered him a ſight of it, in order to have his obſervations upon it, whenever he would pleaſe to call for that purpoſe.—Mr. Fell never entered his houſe after-

wards, nor made any inquiry about this paper, but from that time appeared to commence hoſtilities againſt him, which were diſcovered in various ſingular inſtances, with which the public ſhall not be troubled. The editor, however, was ſtill unwilling to bring forward theſe REMARKS, though juſtice to Mr. Farmer ſeemed to require it, from a deſire to avoid an open rupture with this gentleman. But as now both theſe diſputants are gone off the ſtage, he cannot ſatisfy himſelf as doing juſtice to an injured character, or approving his fidelity to the truſt committed to him, any longer to ſuppreſs this his friend's vindication of himſelf; in which ſentiment ſome judicious perſons who have peruſed it, heartily concur. And it is preſumed many of Mr. Farmer's friends will

will be gratified in ſeeing this ſatisfactory defence of his character as an author and a chriſtian, by a bare ſtatement of facts, which are left to ſpeak for themſelves. This, the reader is deſired to obſerve, is the grand object of the preſent publication, and not "the revival of a controverſy "which has long ſince been finiſhed." That might properly have been objected to; but it will be ſeen, that the following Remarks have no ſuch tendency, as they do not enter into the controverſy at all.

If the editor ſhould incur cenſure for thus bringing forward matters which affect the reputation of a man (in many views reſpectable) after his deceaſe, he will anſwer, in the words of a late well-known writer*, in a ſimilar caſe:—"Though I

* Sir J. Hawkins, Life of Johnſon.

" would not war with the dead *offenſively*,
" I think it neceſſary to be ſtrenuous in
" defence of my illuſtrious friend; which
" I cannot be without ſtrong animadver-
" ſions upon a writer who has greatly in-
" jured him."

If any thing farther be neceſſary as an apology for this publication, it ſhall be the following extract from a letter of a judicious, learned, and candid correſpondent, who had reviſed the manuſcript.—
" That you ſhould publiſh Mr. Farmer's
" Remarks, I conceive, cannot admit of
" a queſtion; not upon the grounds only
" of its being a literary curioſity, and a
" tribute of juſtice to his memory and
" character; but as a duty and obligation
" *laid upon you* by a worthy friend, who *in-*
" *truſted*, by this depoſit, the vindication
" of

" of his name to YOU. The queſtion is, " whether you have not incurred ſome " blame by *deferring* the publication ſo " long. If it ought to be printed, it can- " not be without ſuch a narrative as muſt " reflect, how candidly ſoever drawn up, " on Mr. Fell. Indeed Mr. Farmer's con- " viction of his groſs miſrepreſentations, " &c. is as heavy a charge againſt him, " as any your narrative can contain, " though not perhaps ſo obvious and ex- " plicit."

It may be proper to inform the reader, that, beſides the general Title, ſome of the paſſages in the Notes, which Mr. Farmer had only referred to, are here inſerted at length by

THE EDITOR.

REMARKS

REMARKS

ON

MR. FELL'S LETTER TO MR. FARMER.

REMARK I.

MR. FELL, in his LETTER to MR. FARMER, (page 127) ſays, "In thoſe ar-"ticles" (viz. his ideas of a miracle, and the arguments he has alledged to ſhew that miracles are works peculiar to GOD) he "conſiders Mr. Farmer as approaching "much too near ſome exceptionable doc-"trines advanced by LORD BOLING-"BROKE and MR. HUME."

Mr. HUME (cited by Mr. Fell, p. 128) ſays "A miracle is a violation of the laws of

nature." Mr. Farmer is ſo far from adopting this idea, that, on the contrary, he maintains ——That no effect CAN ever be produced CONTRARY to the laws of nature; if thereby be meaned, the natural powers of ALL ORDERS of exiſtence. (*Diſſertation on Miracles*, page 6.) And therefore he limited the phraſe "the laws of nature," to the Rules by which the viſible world is ſtatedly governed. *Diſſertation* page 7*. See alſo pages 2† and 10.

* "By the laws of nature, I mean, thoſe rules by which the viſible world is ſtatedly governed, or the ordinary courſe of events in it, as fixed and aſcertained by obſervation and experience; and particularly the order of the ſyſtem to which we belong." A note is ſubjoined to illuſtrate the author's meaning.

† "Effects produced by the regular operation of the laws of nature, or that are conformable to its eſtabliſhed courſe, are called *natural*. Effects contrary to this ſettled conſtitution and courſe of things I eſteem *miraculous*."

Now

Now there is an eſſential difference between an effect produced contrary to the natural powers of all orders of exiſtence, (which is an abſolute impoſsibility,) and an effect contrary to the ſtated rules by which the viſible world is ſtatedly governed, which are ever ſubject to the controul of him who made it.

If Mr. HUME, by "the laws of nature," meaned—the Conſtitution of nature, the violation of the former ſeems to imply ſome change or alteration in the latter. Accordingly *Bolingbroke* (cited by Mr. Fell, page 132) ſuppoſes that "the mechanical "conſtitution of the material world is vio- "lated, and the natural production of the "human underſtanding altered" by miracles.

But theſe works, when conſidered merely as effects contrary to the ſettled conſtitution

tion and courſe of things, carry in them no ſuch abſurd implication. For new knowledge may be ſupernaturally communicated without "altering the natural production "of the human underſtanding." And iron may be ſuſpended upon the ſurface of water, by the divine power, without violating the mechanical conſtitution of the material world.

REMARK II.

Mr. HUME (cited by Mr. Fell, p. 130) includes in his definition of a miracle (what does not belong to it) THE AUTHOR or CAUSE of it: viz. "a volition of the "Deity, or the interpoſal of ſome inviſible "agent."

In direct oppoſition to all thoſe who include,

include, in their definition of miracles, the cauſe or author of them, Mr. Farmer has ſhewn at large (*Diſſertation on Miracles*, page 15—19) "that a miraculous effect, "like every common appearance, has its "own proper ſpecific nature, diſtinguiſh-"ing it from all others of a different "kind, ſeparate from the conſideration of "the cauſe." Theſe are the very terms uſed in page 15.

We may convey to others as perfect an idea of a miracle, without taking into conſideration the AUTHOR of it, as we can of a watch or a clock, without ſaying one word about the artiſt by whom either was made.

Notwithſtanding theſe clear diſtinctions between Mr. HUME's ideas of miracles and Mr. *Farmer's*, Mr. Fell attempts to ſhew

ſhew that both are one and the ſame, from page 128 to page 135. And in page 132, he affirms "that the defini-"tion which Mr. Farmer ſuppoſes to be "his, alſo was Mr. HUME's."

REMARK III.

BOLINGBROKE (cited by Mr. Fell, page 134, 135.) after a multitude of other writers, argues "from the ſcale of being "which is continued downwards *below man*, "in our ſyſtem, that the like gradation "of being is in other ſyſtems continued "*above man*."

This trite argument Mr. Farmer attempted to invalidate. *Diſſertation on Miracles*, page 55. But Mr. Fell, inſtead of pointing out to the obſervation of his readers

readers this open oppoſition againſt Lord Bolingbroke's opinion, does even on this head draw a parallel between them.

Mr. FARMER thought that, judging by analogy, "the ſcale of being in this ſyſtem only proves that the creatures in each ſyſtem may riſe gradually above one another, but without any reſpect to the rank of man, and without riſing gradually above him, or the creatures of other ſyſtems;" which is a very different idea from that of Bolingbroke.

On ſo common a topic there may be ſome ſimilar expreſsions in Lord Bolingbroke and Mr. Farmer; and yet the ſentiments of the one are oppoſite to thoſe of the other.

Whoever will give himſelf the trouble

to compare Mr. Fell*, page 137 of his *Letter*, with Mr. Farmer, in his *Diſſertation*,

* Mr. FELL.—Lord Bolingbroke's words, (as Mr. Fell quotes them, and from which he accuſes Mr. Farmer as borrowing) are as follows: "We cannot "diſcern a gradation of beings in other planets by the "help of teleſcopes, as we behold ſuch a gradation by "the help of microſcopes, in our own; but the gra- "dation of ſenſe and intelligence in our own, "from animal to animal, and of intelligence, princi- "pally up to man, as well as the very abrupt man- "ner, if I may ſo ſay, in which this evidently unfurniſh- "ed intellectual ſyſtem ſtops at the human ſpecies, "gives great reaſon to believe, that this gradation is "continued upwards in other ſyſtems, as we perceive "it to be continued downwards in ours. We may "well ſuſpect that ours is the loweſt, in this reſpect, "of all mundane ſyſtems; ſince the rational is ſo "nearly connected, as it is here, with the irrational; "and there may be as much difference between ſome "other creatures of God, (without having recourſe "to angels and archangels) and man, as there is be- "tween a man and an oyſter."———The following note contains Mr. Fell's quotation from Mr. Farmer, which he repreſents as coinciding with Bolingbroke, together

pages 55, 56‡, will ſee how much his *omiſſions* ſerve to deceive his readers.

together with the words which Mr. Fell has *omitted*, which are thoſe diſtinguiſhed by *italics*, and included in brackets [ ].

‡Mr. FARMER.—" We are far from denying, that there are in the univerſe, beings of a higher order than mankind, ſuch as ſurpaſs us far, both in natural and moral excellencies. [*All that we here undertake to ſhew is, that reaſon is ſo far from clearly informing us of the power of any ſuperior beings, beſides* GOD, *to work miracles, that the beſt arguments it can employ, to prove the exiſtence of creatures of a higher order than man, do much more ſtrongly prove that they can act only within a certain limited ſphere . . . . . We allow, indeed, that the infinite number of living beings with which the earth is ſtocked, affords ground to conclude that the other regions of the univerſe are equally furniſhed with inhabitants, adapted to their reſpective ſituations.*] We may allow farther, that the *gradation* of being from lower to higher, which we obſerve in *our* ſyſtem, furniſhes a proof that the like gradation obtains in *other* ſyſtems, and that their inhabitants differ from one another in degrees of excellence, and riſe one above another in

REMARK IV.

Mr. FELL, (page 142) ſays, "Lord Bo-
"lingbroke ſuppoſes intellectual beings in

order. [*But whether they riſe above us in perfection, the argument from analogy alone, as I apprehend, cannot determine. For that only enables us to judge, by God's manner of acting in one caſe, how he will act in another; and of what we do not ſee and know of his ways by what we do. But all that we obſerve in the ſyſtem to which we belong, is an innumerable variety, and a gradation of beings.*] By the rule of analogy, therefore, ſome ſimilar economy may take place in other ſyſtems, and they may contain numberleſs orders of creatures, riſing one above another, till we come to the higheſt of them. Beyond this, the argument from analogy will not carry us," — ["*ſuppoſing it to carry us ſo far . . . Let us however ſuppoſe that the ſcale of being in our planet is a concluſive proof that there are, in the univerſe, creatures as much ſuperior to man, as man is to the meaneſt reptile, ſtill the ſame kind of reaſoning proves . . . that they have a certain limited ſphere of action appointed them by God,*"] &c. &c.

It

" other mundane ſyſtems, to be corporeal as " well as in our own." And then tells Mr. Farmer—" and on this very idea is grounded " all that you ſay of their incapacity to act " beyond their proper ſphere, and their con- " ſequent inability to produce any effects on " this earthly globe."

Mr. Fell has not referred to the place in Mr. Farmer's writings on which he grounded this aſſertion; and for a good reaſon, becauſe no ſuch place can be found in them.

I will fairly ſtate what Mr. Farmer has ſaid on this ſubject. Having ſhewn " that " the ſame arguments which prove the ex- " iſtence of ſuperior created intelligences, do

It will appear to the attentive and impartial reader, that wherein there is a coincidence of expreſſion between Mr. Farmer and Lord Bolingbroke, Mr. Farmer intended not to *adopt* but to *anſwer* his mode of reaſoning. Ed.

"much more ſtrongly conclude againſt their "acting out of their proper ſphere;" (*Differt. on Mir.* page 53—61) he proceeds "to an- "ſwer the objection from their SPIRITUAL "and INVISIBLE NATURE," urged by Dr. CLARKE, pages 61, 62, 63, which objection is briefly this:

"That were the natural powers of the "higheſt angels no greater than the natural "powers of men; ſince thereby they would "be able to do all that inviſibly which a man "can do viſibly, they would be able to work "real miracles."

For anſwer to this objection Mr. Farmer obſerves, (p. 63, 64.) "That though the "powers of angels may be more noble than "man's, yet they may not have the SAME "POWERS that man has. And though their "ſphere of action may be more exalted than "ours, yet they and we may not be appointed "to

"to act in the SAME ſphere." He then obſerves farther, in pages 64, 65, "That it does "not appear that immaterial created ſpirits "have a native power of moving matter, "unleſs they be firſt united to a BODY; or "that this power is eſſential to their nature. "And therefore, that their being SPIRITS "does not prove, (as Dr. *Clarke* ſuppoſes) "their power of working miracles."

He farther ſhews (pages 65, 66, 67,) that "the aſcribing to ſpiritual beings the ſame "natural powers with corporeal ones,— "powers which are the ſole effect of an union "with organized ſyſtems of matter, was not "only an abſurd principle, but ſuch as had "been abuſed in Pagan and Popiſh countries "to the worſt purpoſes."

So that to have ſpoken the truth and done Mr. Farmer juſtice, Mr. Fell ſhould have ſaid (the very contrary of what he did ſay,

viz.) "That Mr. Farmer, like Dr. Clarke, "ſuppoſes angels to be *ſpiritual beings*, and on "this very idea grounds his anſwer to that "great man; there being no neceſſary, nor "(ſo far as reaſon alone can judge) any pro-"bable connexion between their ſpiritua-"lity, and a power of acting upon matter, "and working miracles."

REMARK V.

Various paſſages from Mr. Farmer's Diſſertation, reſpecting the POWER OF ANGELS, as they are cited by Mr. Fell, neceſſarily miſlead his readers, through theſe two circumſtances: viz.—his not giving notice when he conſiders the matter on the footing of REASON ALONE, and—under what LIMITATIONS he oppoſes their power of working miracles.

From

From REASON ALONE we can never prove their having this power, or indeed any power at all, over men. It is only from REVELATION that we learn, that God may commiſſion and employ them to work miracles: a point admitted by Mr. Farmer, *Differt.* page 148 *. Of this, notice ought to have been

* "We do not however deny, that Chriſt might employ angels in executing his orders, particularly in working miracles, for they are all *made ſubject to him.* Nevertheleſs, it does not appear from the ſcriptures, that they can perform miracles of themſelves, and without an immediate divine commiſſion. On the contrary, according to the ſcripture account of them, if they bring any meſſages to men, they firſt receive them from God; if they controul the conrſe of nature, it is by authority from the Lord of nature; and if they interpoſe at all in the affairs of our ſyſtem, it is not as they ſee fit themſelves, but according to the command of GOD, as miniſters of his will, &c. &c."——It ſeems utterly aſtoniſhing, that any intelligent chriſtian divine ſhould object to ſuch ſentiments as theſe, and ſhould not ſee that the *contrary* ones tend to ſet aſide the uſe of miracles, and thus to deſtroy one grand evidence of divine revelation. ED.

given;

given; as alſo of the *limitation* before mentioned.

It is only againſt the power of angels to work miracles OF THEMSELVES, and without an immediate divine commiſsion that he argues. Neverthelcſs Mr. Fell, inſtead of properly holding this up to view, roundly affirms, (page 153) "that Mr. Farmer labours to prove, that no miraculous event "could ever happen without the IMMEDIATE AGENCY OF GOD."

It was to no purpoſe that, in the very ſection to which Mr. Fell refers, the point to be proved is ſtated differently, page 89—"that miracles are never performed without the immediate agency, OR ORDER of God." The ſame thing had been more fully expreſſed, page 50.—"They are always to be "aſcribed to a divine interpoſition; by which "I mean, that they are never wrought but "either

"either by GOD himſelf, OR BY SUCH OTHER "BEINGS as HE COMMISSIONS to perform "them."—"Now whether GODworks the mi- "racles himſelf alone, or whether he enables "and commiſsions OTHERS TO WORK THEM, "there is equally a divine interpoſition."

REMARK VI.

The reaſoning employed by Mr. Farmer, againſt the liberty of angels to work miracles, without the order of God, does not "conclude againſt a PARTICULAR PROVIDENCE," as Mr. Fell ſuppoſes, page 153. For God may exerciſe ſuch a providence by the inſtrumentality of angels, as Mr. Farmer admits, *Diſſert.* page 150, in the note. "On the "other hand it may be alledged, That the "ſacred writers ſeem to have thought, that "God adminiſtered *a particular providence* by "the

" the inſtrumentality of his angels; and con-
" ſequently in deſcribing the effects of a SPE-
" CIAL DIVINE INTERPOSITION, would very
" naturally mention the agency of thoſe mi-
" niſtering ſpirits, much in the ſame manner
" as is done in the paſſages here cited," (viz. with reſpect to the elements, &c.)

On the authority of revelation he conceives of angels * as " *miniſtering ſpirits*," which is the view given of them, *Heb.* i. 14. where they are ſaid to be " SENT FORTH *to* " *miniſter for them who ſhould be heirs of ſal-* " *vation.*" Nor can any one prove (whatever Bolingbroke, cited by Mr. Fell, page 154, &c. may pretend,) That particular providences are miracles, or contrary to the ſtated and eſtabliſhed rules of the divine government.

* See the paſſage as quoted above, Note, page 89.

REMARK

REMARK VII.

Some of the topics urged by BOLINGBROKE and HUME againſt ALL miracles, Mr. Farmer has wreſted out of their hands, and employed for a very different purpoſe; namely, to prove the falſehood of PAGAN and POPISH miracles, and all ſuch miracles as could not not fitly be referred to GOD. *Diſſert.* page 71, *et ſeq.**

* [" If *evil ſpirits* do not work miracles *at preſent*, why ſhould we believe they ever have?] Indeed, our not having *ſeen* any miracles ourſelves, is a ſufficient reaſon for rejecting thoſe that are *reported* by others; *unleſs it can be ſhewn* that they were expedient .... to anſwer ſome extraordinary purpoſes of divine providence; or that they are attended by an *evidence of their certainty*, ſuperior to the natural preſumption of their falſehood, and to the proofs which ſatisfy us with regard to the common events of life. [But this is far from being the caſe, with regard to the generality of thoſe miracles

Nevertheleſs Mr. Fell, by mutilations, and additions, endeavours to perſuade his readers, and has actually perſuaded ſtrangers to the *Diſſertation*, that Mr. Farmer argues againſt ALL MIRACLES, as *Hume* profeſſedly does. See Mr. Fell's Letter, pages 147, 153; and more eſpecially the laſt paragraph in page 149. Nay he aſſerts, in expreſs terms, page 145, "You," (meaning Mr. Farmer) "oblige us with a ſtring of arguments very "much in the manner of Mr. Hume,

which are related in *history*. Amongſt them all, we ſhall find none which on any account deſerve credit, excepting ſuch as in their nature, intention and circumſtances, are worthy of God; and which, therefore, allowing their reality, may reaſonably be ſuppoſed to have him for their author. OF THIS KIND ARE THE MIRACLES OF THE JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN DISPENSATIONS."]—Mr. Fell has quoted part of the above paragraph from Mr. Farmer, but the firſt and laſt paſſages included in [ ] he has thought proper to leave out.

"AGAINST

"AGAINST THE REALITY OF ALL MIRA-
"CLES WHATEVER *."

* Candour may require it to be ſuggeſted here, that Mr. Fell's words might poſſibly be conſtrued as meaning, —not that he charged Mr. Farmer with arguing "againſt ALL miracles whatever," but with adopting ſuch arguments as Mr. *Hume* had made uſe of when HE was writing againſt all miracles. And yet the Critical Reviewers underſtood Mr. Fell's words in the ſenſe Mr. Farmer did, as other readers may naturally do. Nor is it more extraordinary, that a man ſo much under the influence of prejudice and paſſion, ſhould charge Mr. Farmer with infidel principles, than that he ſhould repreſent his tutor, Dr. Doddridge, as "an enthuſiaſtical Soci-
"cinian," or exhibit one of the Doctor's warmeſt admirers, in a diſcourſe from the pulpit, in as obnoxious a light, on account of a certain publication, in which he had not the ſmalleſt concern—a circumſtance which ſhould not now have been mentioned, had not an injurious impreſſion been thereby made on ſome honeſt minds, which is yet ſcarcely worn off, and which, after the fulleſt conviction of the falſehood, he refuſed to take the proper means of correcting.

To

To this it is anſwered,

FIRST, that in the ſeveral arguments urged by Mr. Farmer, in page 70—88, againſt "ſuch miracles as cannot fitly be aſcribed "to GOD," it is not even *poſſible* for any one not to ſee, that it is againſt miracles of THIS DESCRIPTION ONLY.

Mr. Fell, for inſtance, in page 149, cites Mr. Farmer as ſaying—"that if moſt of "theſe miracles," (viz. thoſe before ſpoken of) "are allowed to be mere effects of "human fraud, WHY NOT ALL?" No man can doubt what THOSE MIRACLES were, of which Mr. Farmer is ſpeaking, *Diſſert.* page 76, and that they were "ſuch ONLY "as could not have GOD for their author."

Where there is any ſimilarity of expreſſion between Mr. Hume and Mr. Farmer (which could ſcarcely be avoided when he is arguing from

from the ſame topics) there is a great difference of ſentiment. It would be eaſy here to deſcend into particulars.

SECONDLY. What farther renders it impoſsible that any one ſhould miſtake Mr. Farmer's deſign is,—his having pointed out at large, and in many particulars, the great difference there is between the miracles which he rejects, and thoſe of SCRIPTURE. His words are as follows. "The "numerous frauds of every kind which "have obtained in the world, are a ground "of caution, not of univerſal ſcepticiſm. "Though many miracles have been forged, "it will not from thence follow that NO "REAL miracles have been performed. "Nay, how can we account for a practice "ſo univerſal of forging miracles, for the "ſupport of *falſe* religions, if on ſome occa- "ſions they had not actually been wrought

" for the confirmation of a TRUE one * . . .
" It would be unreaſonable, either to re-
" ceive or reject all [accounts of] miracles
" alike; in caſe there be a juſt diſtinction
" between ſome and others. Now the MI-
" RACLES OF SCRIPTURE *are more credible*
" *in their own nature than* ANY OTHERS,
" being performed for ends of the higheſt
" importance, ſuch as are ſuitable to the
" character of an infinitely perfect being,
" and which could not be accompliſhed in
" any other method. THEIR TRUTH IS
" CONFIRMED BY WITNESSES OF THE MOST
" UNSUSPECTED CREDIT; by the public
" revolutions and events which they pro-
" duced (ſuch as the converſion of the
" world to the Chriſtian faith †) and which

* Dr. Middleton's Pref. Diſc. to a Letter from Rome, page 86—88.

† On this paſſage Mr. Farmer has the following note: " The miracles of CHRISTIANITY confirmed a doctrine

" cannot

" cannot poſsibly be accounted for but upon
" the ſuppoſition of their TRUTH: by the
" clear prophecies delivered by the authors
" of theſe works, of the completion of
" which diſtant ages are witneſſes; and by
" a variety of other arguments peculiar to
" THESE miracles, and which ſerve to de-
" tect and expoſe the falſehood of ALL
" OTHERS. Thoſe ſeem to me but ill to
" conſult the credit of the GOSPEL MIRA-
" CLES, who place them on a level with
" groſs impoſtures, inſtead of pointing out
" the WIDE DIFFERENCE *between them*; and
" who have no other way of ſupporting the
" Chriſtian faith, than by countenancing
" lies and popular errors, which in all ages
" has created the ſtrongeſt prejudice againſt

" contrary to men's ſtrongeſt prejudices, and could not
" be believed without danger; OTHER miracles, for
" the moſt part, cannot be rejected without danger, and
" are deſigned to eſtabliſh popular and profitable errors."

" it, and given occaſion to boundleſs ſuſ-
" picions."

Mr. Fell takes no notice of this paſſage, though in page 149—151, he cites the page which immediately precedes, and that which follows it. Nay, in page 151, he has given an extract from the 77th page of the *Diſſertation*, and that extract is the introduction to the account Mr. Farmer gives of the circumſtances which *diſtinguiſh the miracles of* SCRIPTURE *from* ALL OTHERS. Had he not ſtopped ſhort in the middle of the paragraph, what would his readers have thought of his attempt to claſs Mr. Farmer with Mr. HUME and LORD BOLINGBROKE? Had it happened otherwiſe, he had undone all.

I do not blame the REVIEWER of Mr. Fell's Letter (ſee the CRITICAL REVIEW for November, 1785, page 383) for " not ſee-
" ing the diſagreement between Mr. Hume's
" idea

" idea on the ſubject of a miracle, and Mr. " Farmer's," as he relied on Mr. Fell's account of the latter; nor do I wonder at his calling upon Mr. Farmer " to point out " the exceptions in favour of the miracles of " HOLY WRIT *," as Mr. Fell concealed its being already done.

* The writer of the article in the CRITICAL REVIEW, above referred to, reſpecting Mr. *Fell's Letter to Mr. Farmer*, after giving an account of that work, expreſſes his ſurpriſe, that Mr. Farmer ſhould not have pointed out the difference which there is, in his idea, between the miracles of the *Goſpel*, and thoſe of the *Romiſh Church*, expreſſing alſo a wiſh that he would do it in ſome future work. Mr. Farmer was extremely hurt by ſuch a paſſage in ſo reſpectable a journal, being calculated to convey a very unfavourable idea of his writings to many who had not read them; and therefore he wiſhed to inform the conductors of this Review, in order that they might do him the juſtice of informing their readers, " That what was mentioned as ſo deſirable to be done, " he actually HAD DONE already."—Mr. Farmer's ſight being at that time defective, he requeſted a friend to convey this information to the Reviewers; which ac-

REMARK VIII.

I might point out other exceptionable things in Mr. Fell's Letter; but paſsing them over, I ſhall only take notice that he denies (in page 162) that he ever charged Mr. Farmer "with ſiniſter motives, and diſ-"guiſed infidelity." Mr. Farmer was not ſingular in putting this conſtruction upon ſome paſſages in his *Demoniacs*. And to

cordingly he readily did, in very few words; merely ſtating the FACT, and referring to the page. Mr. Fell, by a ſingular circumſtance, coming at the knowledge of the perſon who performed this act of friendſhip for Mr. Farmer, conceived of him as an enemy to himſelf; and ſeveral years afterwards, when a freſh occaſion offered, wrote him a very illiberal letter on the ſubject, which ſufficiently explained other parts of his conduct towards the ſame perſon, which had hitherto appeared unaccountable, to which reference was made above. See page 70, and 95, note.

my

my apprehenſion, Mr. Fell has endeavoured to fix the charge of INFIDELITY upon Mr. Farmer, in the very letter in which he denies his ever having advanced it. Why otherwiſe has he ſo groſsly miſrepreſented him as arguing (like Mr. Hume and Lord Bolingbroke) againſt ALL MIRACLES WHATEVER?

Mr. Fell indeed ſays (page 164) "I have "no doubt in my own mind that LORD BO- "LINGBROKE really BELIEVED THE GOS- "PEL to contain a revelation from GOD." On the other hand, it is ſelf-evident, that no man can believe the goſpel to contain a revelation from God, who argues againſt ALL MIRACLES. Whoever denies the reſurrection of Chriſt, muſt regard the goſpel as a fable.

A

FRAGMENT

OF

MR. FARMER'S MANUSCRIPT TREATISE

ON THE

HISTORY OF BALAAM.

EXTRACTED

BY THE LATE MICHAEL DODSON, ESQ.

TO THE READER.

IT was mentioned in the preceding account of Mr. Farmer's writings, that among his MSS. which were deſtroyed, was one completely ready for the preſs, on the caſe of the prophet BALAAM, and that the late MICHAEL DODSON, Eſq. among others who had been favoured with the reading of it, much lamented its deſtruction. A literary correſpondent, on the peruſal of theſe Memoirs, informed the compiler that this learned gentleman had made ſome extracts from that performance, which he thought likely to be among his papers. Being anxious, if poſsible, to procure at leaſt an outline of this curious piece, application was made to Mrs. Dodſon, by reſpectable friends, who felt the ſame deſire, and it happily proved ſucceſsful. Having taken the trouble to ſearch the numerous papers of the deceaſed, ſhe at length found one ſuperſcribed *Extracts from Mr. Farmer on the caſe of Balaam*, which ſhe very obligingly tranſmitted to the editor, with permiſsion to

to tranſcribe it for the purpoſe he had in view.

Though this paper does not fully anſwer the expectation raiſed concerning it, reſpecting Mr. Farmer's interpretation of *Balaam's aſs ſpeaking*, ſome expreſsions in it confirm the ſuppoſition grounded upon the author's other writings, that he conſidered the whole ſcene, like that of Chriſt's temptation by the devil, as VISIONARY.

The hypotheſis itſelf certainly is not a novel one. "Maimonides and others," ſays Biſhop Newton, "have conceived that "the matter was tranſacted in a VISION. "And it muſt be confeſſed," ſays he, "that "many things in the writings of the pro- "phets are ſpoken of as real tranſactions, "which were only viſionary; and theſe "viſions made as ſtrong impreſsions upon "the minds of the prophets as realities*." By this it ſhould ſeem that this learned writer favoured that hypotheſis.—The ſtory, as underſtood literally, appears ſo marvellous, that it has not only been the jeſt of infidels, but a ſtumbling-block to believers. PHILO,

* NEWTON on Prophecy, Vol. I. p. 118.

therefore,

therefore, the learned Jew, in his Life of Moſes, where he mentions the ſtory of Balaam, leaves out the circumſtance of the aſs ſpeaking, to avoid offence to his Gentile readers, though ſimilar prodigies were related in their writings *.

Though it may be eaſier to underſtand this affair as viſionary than as literal, it might require all Mr. Farmer's learning and ingenuity to reconcile the ſcripture narrative to ſuch an interpretation; and therefore it is ever to be lamented, that ſuch a work ſhould not have been given to the public, for which he had proved himſelf to be peculiarly qualified by another of the ſame kind, viz. his "Inquiry into the Na-" ture and Deſign of Chriſt's Temptation " in the Wilderneſs," in which elaborate and ingenious performance, he has been allowed, by moſt learned and judicious readers,

* GROTIUS, who underſtood this ſtory literally, has the following note. "Hæc omnia Maimonides facta " putat in viſione; ut Gen. xxxii. 24. Joſ. v. 13, 14. " Neque tamen ſimilium portentorum deſunt hiſtoriæ, " AGNUS locutus Bocchoride in Egypto regnante apud " Euſebium, Bos locutus apud Livium ſæpè, et apud " Euſebium. Meminêre et Plinius, Polybius, Plu-" tarchus."

to

to have fully eſtabliſhed the grand principles on which his hypotheſis of a DIVINE VISION is erected; particularly by a reference to the ſcenes deſcribed by Ezekiel and other prophets, which could not poſſibly be real ones, though the language ſeems to repreſent them as ſuch, and which are generally allowed to have been merely viſionary. On the ſame principles it may eaſily be imagined, that Mr. Farmer would ingeniouſly interpret this difficult part of the Old Teſtament hiſtory, which ſome have thought an interpolation, though the apoſtle Peter conſidered it as genuine. See *2 Pet.* ii. 16. where he mentions "the dumb aſs "ſpeaking with man's voice to rebuke the "madneſs of the prophet."

Though our learned author's particular explication of this whole narrative is irrecoverably loſt, the following extracts from his illuſtrations of Balaam's truly beautiful and ſublime PREDICTIONS, will be eſteemed precious relics, which it was ſingularly fortunate to have preſerved.

They are printed exactly according to Mr. Dodſon's copy, but it was thought needful, in order to the reader's diſcerning the

the propriety of the author's comment, to inſert the TEXT at length, as he himſelf would moſt probably have done, on the oppoſite page. Beſides Mr. Farmer's notes and references, there are a few others which appear to have been added by Mr. Dodſon, and which are diſtinguiſhed, where it could be done, by the letter D. Some of the quotations the editor has inſerted at length, which are included in [brackets;] the principal of which are thoſe from *Peters on Job*, for the ſake of ſuch readers as may not be poſſeſſed of that excellent work. A few other ſmall inſertions of the editor, are in like manner diſtinguiſhed, or by different marks of reference. The ADDENDA at the cloſe, it is preſumed, will require no apology.

If the publication of this Fragment (for ſuch only can it be called) of our learned author, ſhould induce any reader who is equal to ſuch an undertaking, thoroughly to inveſtigate the ſubject, and to eſtabliſh Mr. Farmer's hypotheſis, or any other, both the editor and the public will have peculiar cauſe for ſatisfaction, that the following paper was reſcued from oblivion.

The PROPHECIES of BALAAM as recorded in the BOOK of NUMBERS, according to the common tranſlation.

NUMB. XXIII. 4—10.

And God met Balaam: and he ſaid unto him, I have prepared ſeven altars, and I have offered upon every altar a bullock and a ram.

5. And the Lord put a word in Balaam's mouth, and ſaid return unto Balak, and thus thou ſhalt ſpeak.

7. And he took up his parable [a] and ſaid, Balak the king of Moab hath brought me from Aram, out of the mountains of the eaſt, ſaying, Come curſe me *b* Jacob, and come defy *c* Iſrael.

8. How ſhall I curſe whom GOD hath not curſed? or how ſhall I defy whom the Lord hath not defied?

9. For from the top of the rocks I ſee him, and from the hills I behold him. Lo the

[a] That is, was tranſported with a prophetic ſpirit. See DURELL on Job, p. 81. D.—[" Le Clerc tranſlates " the word *figuratam orationem*. Thereby is meant, a " weighty and ſolemn ſpeech, delivered in figurative " and majeſtic language. Such remarkably are the pro- " phecies of Balaam. See *Lowth's Prælect.*" Newton on Proph. Vol. I. p. 122.

b [i. e. curſe *for* me. *c* Or execrate. *Lowth.*]

EXTRACTS from MR. FARMER'S MS.

NUMB. XXIII. 7—10.

It pleaſed GOD to manifeſt himſelf to Balaam, but in a manner very different from what he wiſhed or expected. When he was pleading the number and value of the ſacrifices he had offered to render him and the other gods propitious, Jehovah "put a word into his mouth," and at his return to Balak he broke out, under an immediate divine impulſe, into the following weighty and pathetic ſpeech, which he pronounced with a high voice:

"Of all the perſons in the Eaſt, famous for the magic art[d], I was ſingled out as the ableſt to blaſt the army of the Iſraelites. But how impoſsible is it, by any execration, to bring evil upon a people who are under the protection of God, even Jehovah! From the eminence on which I now ſtand, I command a view of their encampment: a moſt magnificent proſpect! And what

[d] On the character and pretenſions of the Magicians. See Eſſay on Miracles, p. 254—287.

Of the ancient evocation of Gods, ſee 1 Kennicott. 158, &c. Law, 93—95.

people ſhall dwell alone, and ſhall not be reckoned among the nations.

10. Who can count the duſt of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Iſrael? —Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my laſt end [e] be like his!

[e] The eminently learned MICHAELIS (in his Syntagma Commentationum, p. 107,) ſuppoſes that Balaam's wiſh has a reference to a future ſtate. See PETERS on Job, p. 285.

[The paſſage is as follows. "The word literally "denotes, an after time or ſtate; a ſtate that begins "again after ſome remarkable period. Thus the re- "maining part of Job's life, after his recovery from his "affliction, is called his ACHERITH (ch. xlii. 2.) "And as men ſurvive, as it were, in their *poſterity*, this "imaginary exiſtence too is called their ACHERITH.— "But the word is never uſed in a more natural or proper "ſenſe, than when applied to expreſs a future ſtate after "death; which is evidently the ſenſe wherein it ought "to be underſtood in this parable of BALAAM. So "likewiſe *Pſalm* xxxvii. 37. whence the wiſh of Ba- "laam might receive farther illuſtration."]

TAYLOR

is truly aſtoniſhing, theſe people are perfectly ſeparated from all others by their religion and laws. They bear no reſemblance to, and will never be incorporated with, any of the ſurrounding nations.—What a countleſs hoſt! It is impoſsible to reckon up the number contained in only one of thoſe four camps [f] into which they are divided.—Oh! that I might die the death of the righteous, ſuch as the Iſraelites are! May I never come to an untimely end [g] for attempting to curſe a people ſo ſignally favoured by heaven!"

TAYLOR underſtands it of his poſterity (*Scheme*, page 246.) May my poſterity be like his!—In the LXX the word is σπερμα. Compare *Numb.* xxiv. 20. This I take to be the true ſenſe. D. [See LOWTH. Prælect. xiv. Greg. Tranſ. Note S. H.]

[f] See the ſecond chapter of Numbers, *paſſim.*

[g] From chap. xxxi. 10. it appears that Balaam was ſlain by the Iſraelites; and in the paſſage before us the prophetic ſpirit ſeems to have intimated to him that he would come to an untimely end. See Grotius and Le Clerc in loc.

NUMB. XXIII. 18—22.

18. And he took up his parable and ſaid, riſe up Balak and hear: hearken unto me thou ſon of Zippor.

19. God is not a man that he ſhould lie, neither the ſon of man that he ſhould repent. Hath he ſaid, and ſhall not he do it? Or hath he ſpoken, and ſhall he not make it good?

20. Behold I have received *commandment* to bleſs, and he hath bleſſed, and I cannot reverſe it.

21. He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he ſeen perverſeneſs in Iſrael. The LORD his God is with him, and the ſhout of a king is among them.

22. GOD brought them out of Egypt. He [h] hath as it were, the ſtrength of an unicorn.

[h] This, by a change of perſon, is moſt commonly underſtood of ISRAEL. Mr. Farmer refers it to EGYPT, the immediate antecedent, ſuppoſing the idea to be,—ſince the almighty had delivered this people from that moſt powerful kingdom, the king of Moab &c. would in vain expect to ſubdue them. ED.

NUMB.

Balaam again retired from the king to conſult Jehovah, who was pleaſed, while the ſon of Beor was in this receſs, to inſpire him with the following anſwer, to which the ſtricteſt attention of Balak was demanded.

"The God of Iſrael (the only being in the univerſe who can properly be ſtiled GOD) is not like the heathen deities, of human origin, not ſubject to the variable paſsions of mankind. His decrees are never reverſed, nor can the execution of them be defeated. Conſider it well: I have received a commiſsion, and ſupernatural inſpiration to bleſs the Iſraelites. GOD hath bleſſed them, and it is impoſsible for me to engage him to change his purpoſe. They keep free from idolatry, and thoſe enormous vices which attend it; and for this reaſon Jehovah their God is with them; and while they preſerve their allegiance to him, he will render them victorious and triumphant. If the king of Moab and the princes of Midian entertain any doubt of it, let them take warning by thoſe diſplays of God's power and juſtice by which he accompliſhed their deliverance

NUMB. XXIII. 23, 24.

23. Surely *there is* no enchantment againſt Jacob, neither *is there* any divination againſt Iſrael. According to this time[1], it ſhall be ſaid of Jacob and Iſrael, "What hath God wrought?"

24. Behold the people ſhall riſe up as a great lion, and lift up himſelf as a young lion. He ſhall not lie down until he eat off the prey, and drink the blood of the ſlain.

[1] *According to this time*—"whenſoever the occaſion requires."] Compare the LXX, where κατα καιρον anſwers to the Hebrew word which we render "according to this time," and which properly denotes "according to the ſeaſon or the occaſion."—Compare Iſaiah lx. 22. [A little one ſhall become a thouſand, and a ſmall one a ſtrong nation: I the LORD will haſten it in his time.]

See Biſhop PEARCE, Vol. II. p. 381. Bos. Prolog. to LXX on Judges xxi. 22. LINDSEY's Sequel, p. 321.

out of Egypt, which far ſurpaſſeth all other ſtates and kingdoms.

" It is in vain for you to have recourſe to inchantments and divinations againſt the Iſraelites: Whenſoever the occaſion [i] requires them, the appearances of GOD in their favour will be ſuch as to ſtrike the world with the greateſt aſtoniſhment. Conſider well what I now foretel you: Every hoſtile attack upon them will be in the iſſue as fatal to the aggreſſors as it would be to a beaſt of the foreſt to rouſe a fierce lion, by which he would be torn and devoured in a moment."

NUMB. XXIV. 3—24.

While Balaam was ſurveying the camp of Iſrael [ver. 2 [k]] and the king and princes were expecting what he would deliver, the ſpirit of GOD came upon him, under whoſe immediate inſpiration and uncontroulable influence he expreſſed himſelf greatly to his own mortification, to the following effect [l].

[k] [" And Balaam lift up his eyes, and he ſaw Iſrael abiding in his tents according to their tribes, &c.]

[l] LOWTH's Prælectiones xx. [See the paſſage referred to, quoted at length in the *addenda*.]

NUMB. XXIV. 3—6.

3. And he took up his parable and ſaid, Balaam the ſon of Beor hath ſaid, and the man whoſe eyes are open hath ſaid,——

4. He hath ſaid which heard the words of GOD, which ſaw the viſion of the Almighty, falling *into a trance*, [not in the *Heb.*] but having his eyes open [m].

5. How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, *and* thy tabernacles, O Iſrael!

6. As the valleys [n] are they ſpread forth, as gardens by the river ſide, as the trees

[m] The word סתם is only uſed here and in *Lam.* iii. 8. where it ſignifies to *ſhut*. See Newton on Proph. I. 129. ED.

[n] See PETERS on Job, p. 447. [" There is another word in this ſentence (Job xxviii. 4.) which may demand to have its meaning fixed, I mean NACHAL.—It ſometimes ſignifies *a vale*, but oftener a torrent, or tide of ſpreading waters, which has ſomewhat of the ſame appearance. *They are ſpread forth as the valleys* (or rather as the floods of water) ſays Balaam, of the tents of Iſrael, as they overſpread the plains of Moab, *Numb.* xxiv. 6. And, without doubt, the regular encampment of 600,000 fighting men, together with their families and followers, amounting in all, as commonly computed, to three millions, muſt needs make a fine appearance, and extend itſelf very wide."]

of

"Attend, O king of Moab and princes of Midian, to what Balaam is divinely commiſsioned to ſpeak to you: to what that man is divinely commiſsioned to ſpeak, who, while he was looking upon the Iſraelites with a deſire to curſe them, found his eyes (in effect) ſhut[m]; having loſt all perception of external objects. Give ſtrict attention to what he is divinely commiſsioned to reveal, who *hears God ſpeaking to him and* [o] ſees a viſion and repreſentation of the Almighty, and under his preſent TRANCE or ECSTASY hath as full and perfect a view of thoſe ſcenes which are preſented to his mind, as if they were what to him they appear to be, the objects of corporeal ſight. [p]

"How inexpreſsibly delightful is the view which I now have of the camp of Iſrael! The fertility and beauty of a well-watered valley,

[o] This clauſe *in italic* not in the Samaritan. D.

[p] See Inquiry on Chriſt's Temptation, third edit. p. 80. and p. 95. [Where the author conſiders the diſtinction which the ſcripture makes between a viſion and a trance or ecſtaſy, referring to the above paſſage reſpecting Balaam.] JORTIN's Diſſert. p. 190, &c.

or

of lign-aloes which the LORD hath planted, *and* as cedar trees beſide the waters.

7. He ſhall pour the water out of his buckets, and his ſeed ſhall be as many waters [q], and his king ſhall be higher than Agag, [r] and his kingdom ſhall be exalted.

8. GOD brought him forth out of Egypt: he hath, as it were, the ſtrength of an unicorn: he ſhall eat up the nations *which are* his enemies, and ſhall break their bones, and pierce them through with his arrows.

9. He couched, he lay down as a lion, and as a great lion, who ſhall ſtir him up? Bleſſed is he that bleſſeth thee, and curſed is he that curſeth thee.

[q] Read מזרעו ורוי בעמים רבים or יאול אדם מילין or יזל agreeably to the LXX εξελευσεται ανθρωπος εκ του σπερματος αυτου και κυριευσει εθνων πολλων. [*A man ſhall come forth of his ſeed, who ſhall rule over many nations.*] The Chal. Par. Onk. and Jer. Targ. agree nearly with LXX.—It is more probable that יצא (which in Iſaiah xi. 1. is rendered as here εξελευσεται) is the true reading, D.

[r] AGAG was the general name of the kings of the Amalekites (1 *Kings* xvi. 8.) who were the moſt powerful people in thoſe parts. They were ſubdued by Saul, 1 *Sam.* xv. 8.

17. I ſhall

or garden; the fragrancy of thoſe aloes which perfume the air with their odours, and the majeſtic appearance of the loftieſt cedars, are but imperfect repreſentations of the flouriſhing condition of theſe deſcendants of Jacob. A people whom GOD will bleſs with a numerous poſterity, and whoſe princes ſhall excel thoſe whoſe power you continually celebrate. GOD, who delivered them out of Egypt, that potent kingdom, will raiſe them to great pre-eminence, and enable them utterly to deſtroy every hoſtile nation. They will live without any fear of being moleſted by enemies; and it would be as dangerous to diſturb them, as for a weaker beaſt to rouſe a lion out of his den. Bleſſed is (*or* be) he that bleſſeth thee, and curſed is (*or* be) he that curſeth thee."

Aſſerting, as he had done before [v. 15, 16.] his own immediate inſpiration by the Moſt High, by the only true GOD, in the way of VISION (in which things remote are repreſented as near, and things future as if they were preſent) Balaam added — "I ſee

17. I ſhall ſee him, [s] but not now; I ſhall behold him, but not nigh. There ſhall come a ſtar [t] out of Jacob, and a ſceptre ſhall riſe out of Iſrael, and ſhall ſmite the corners of Moab, and deſtroy all the children of Sheth.

18. And Edom ſhall be a poſſeſsion. Seir alſo ſhall be a poſſeſsion for his enemies, and Iſrael ſhall do valiantly.

19. Out of Jacob ſhall come he that ſhall have dominion, and ſhall deſtroy him that remaineth of the city.

20. And when he looked on Amalek, he took up his parable and ſaid, Amalek *was* the firſt of the nations, but his latter end *ſhall be* that he periſh for ever.

21. And he looked on the Kenites, and took up his parable and ſaid, Strong is thy dwelling-place, and thou putteſt thy neſt in a rock.

22. Nevertheleſs, the Kenite ſhall be waſted until Aſhur ſhall carry thee away captive.

[s] DAVID and other kings who ſubdued Moab.' See Jeffery, p. 151. [See 2 Sam. viii. 2. &c.]

[t] [Some refer this ultimately to the Meſſiah. See Bp. Newton and Peters on Job.]

NUMB.

ſee, though you are not to expect him but in an age remote from the preſent, an illuſtrious prince ariſing in Iſrael, who will ſubdue the Moabites, and deſtroy all the poſterity of Seth. The Iſraelites inſpired by Heaven with valour, will prove victorious over all their enemies. They will take poſſeſsion of the country of the Edomites, not excepting Seir, and all thoſe places and cities which are moſt ſtrongly fortified by nature and art."

When he looked on the deſcendants of Amalek, one of the moſt ancient and eminent of all the neighbouring nations, he reſumed his prophetic ſpeech, and foretold their entire deſtruction—" becauſe without any provocation, they were the firſt to attack the people of Jehovah in their travels."

He then looked on the Kenites, who were mingled with the people of Midian and Amalek, and foretold—" That even their mountains and rocks, though deemed inacceſsible, would not prevent them from being gradually waſted by the power of the Iſraelites, till at laſt they ſhould be carried away into captivity by the Aſſyrian monarchs."

His

NUMB. xxiv. 23, 24.

23. And he took up his parable and ſaid, Alas! who ſhall live when GOD doeth this?

24. And ſhips ſhall come from the coaſt of Chittim, and ſhall afflict Aſhur, and ſhall afflict Eber*, and he alſo ſhall periſh for ever.

* The Jews are commonly ſuppoſed to have been called *Hebrews* from *Eber*, a deſcendant of Shem, who is ſtiled, *Gen.* x. 21. 'the father of the children of Eber,' who was one of the anceſtors of Abraham, to whom, on that account, this name has been thought to be given, *Gen.* xiv. 13. And ſome commentators ſuppoſe, as Mr. Farmer ſeems to have done, that the above prediction concerning *Eber*, refers to the oppreſſion of the *Hebrew nation*, and their final deſtruction by the Romans. The LXX render the word 'Εβερ αιους. But it appears highly improbable that Balaam, who was commiſſioned to *bleſs* this people inſtead of *curſing* them, as he was hired to do, and who had reluctantly foretold their great proſperity and their ſuperiority to all their enemies, ſhould at this very time, in the hearing of Balak, utter a prediction of their total ruin. The word עבר has a ſignification more conſiſtent with the general deſign of Balaam's prophecies, and more honourable to the Iſraelites. It properly denotes *from beyond*, or *the other ſide*, viz. of a river; and was given to Abraham by the Canaanites, when he ſojourned among them, with reference to this circumſtance, in the paſſage above referred to: *And there came one that had eſcaped, and told Abraham the* HEBREW: עבר, the man from beyond the river, viz. the Euphrates, which is always meant by that term. According the LXX and *Aquila* tranſlate it περατης. The paſſage, therefore, in this prediction of Balaam, concerning the deſtruction of EBER, may naturally be underſtood,

His views were now carried forward to ſtill more diſtant periods, and he was oppreſſed with the proſpect of the deſolation occaſioned by the great empires of the world. It was not without a deep ſigh that he uttered the following prediction. "How difficult will it be to eſcape with life when the Aſſyrian will ſubdue ſo many nations! But they alſo in their turn ſhall ſuffer the vengeance of heaven. The poſterity of Chittim, who peopled Greece and Italy, ſhall overthrow the Aſſyrian monarchy, after having been transferred to the Perſians. They ſhall alſo utterly deſtroy the Hebrews * themſelves. Afterwards Chittim ſhall periſh for ever; the empire firſt of the Greeks, then of the Romans, ſhall be entirely deſtroyed. So univerſal is the providence, and ſo impartial is the juſtice of God, who conducts the revolutions of the world."

ſtood, not of the *Hebrews*, or Iſraelites, but of thoſe Eaſtern nations which were at enmity with them, which lay beyond the river Euphrates, ſtill called by the ſame name which Abraham had received for the like reaſon. Thus it was underſtood by GROTIUS, whoſe note upon the paſſage is as follows: (ED.)

VASTABUNTQUE HEBRÆOS עבר eos qui transflumen ſunt ſignificat. Flumen Euphratem intelligè. Etiam Euphratem tranſgredientur Macedonum ſive Græcorum arma. Et hoc ad Alexandrum pertinere nemo non videt.

ADDENDA.

MR. DODSON, on the back of his MS. has made many additional remarks and references, but few of which are ſufficiently diſtinct to admit of being tranſcribed, and properly inſerted. The following, though they do not relate to the foregoing paſſages, may be thought worthy of preſerving here.

NUMB. XXII. 18.—*The Lord* MY GOD.

It ſeems not likely that Balaam ſhould call Jehovah HIS God. But Samar. and Heb. have אלהי, except that Heb. MS. No. 80, omits the word. (It ſhould perhaps be אלהים) See Kennicott's Rem. p. 194. Diſſ. Sect. 26. 89. The LXX read κυριου του Θεου.

In NUMB. xxiii. 3. יקרה ſhould be יקרא as in Samar. and in v. 15, אקרה ſhould be אקרא, as in Samar. and 1 Heb. MS. See More. Kennicott. Rem. p. 40. 380.

In

In another place, reference is made to Theol. Repos. iv. 34. 97. 108.

As in the preceding illuſtrations of Balaam's prophecies ſeveral references are made to Biſhop LOWTH'S PRÆLECTIONES, it may not be amiſs to add ſome quotations from that learned and elegant work, containing the author's high encomium of theſe predictions, and his poetical tranſlation of one of them with an Engliſh verſion.

LECT. IV.—" To which we may add, the prophecies of Balaam, the Meſopotamian, pronounced alſo in the parabolic ſtyle, as appears from the extreme neatneſs of the compoſition, the metrical and parallel ſentences, the ſublimity of the language and ſentiment, and the uncommon elegance of the verſe.

LECT. XVIII.—" In the Moſaic hiſtory I have already quoted, as the faireſt examples of the Hebrew poetry, the imprecations of Noah, the bleſsing of Jacob, and the predictions of Balaam: than all which (particularly thoſe of Balaam) I do not know

that the whole extent of the prophetic writings could afford more pertinent inſtances. ———Among the prophecies of Balaam, I will alſo venture to claſs that moſt elegant poem, which is reſcued from oblivion by the prophet MICAH, and which, in matter and diction, in the ſtructure, form, and character of the compoſition, ſo admirably agrees with the other monuments of his fame, that it evidently appears to be a citation from the anſwer of Balaam to the king of Moab*.

Wherewith ſhall I come before Jehovah, &c.

LECT. XX. "Among the ſhorter prophecies, I need only mention thoſe of Balaam, each of which is poſſeſſed of a cer-

* "See *Micah* vi. 6—8. and the late Biſhop BUT-"LER's Sermon on the character of Balaam." [In the diſcourſe here referred to, contained in the Volume of Sermons at the Rolls Chapel, the author has this ſtrange poſition, p. 124, "The ſuppoſition of his (Balaam's) "being under a ſupernatural reſtraint, is a mere fiction "of *Philo*: he is plainly repreſented to be under no "other force or reſtraint than the Fear of GOD."—How any one, poſſeſſing the fear of God could undertake the buſineſs for which Balak ſent for him, is utterly incredible. That he was under a divine reſtraint, as well as a divine impulſe, which Mr. Farmer ſuppoſes, is evident upon the face of the narrative.]

tain

tain accuracy of arrangement and ſymmetry of form: they open with an elegant exordium, they proceed with a methodical continuation of the ſubject, and are wound up with a full and graceful concluſion."

"That I may not conclude this lecture without exhibiting the form of ſome prophetic poem complete in all its parts, I have ſelected one of the prophecies of Balaam, which have more than once deſervedly attracted our attention: for indeed I do not know that the whole ſcope of the Hebrew poetry contains any thing more exquiſite or perfect. This which is at preſent under our conſideration, abounds in gay and ſplendid imagery, copied immediately from the tablet of nature; and is chiefly conſpicuous for the glowing elegance of the ſtyle, and the form and diverſity of the figures. Though every attempt to diſplay the beauties of the Hebrew imagery in the poetry of another language muſt fall greatly ſhort of the deſign, it will yet give a little variety to our ſtudies, to interſperſe them occaſionally with modern verſe. On theſe occaſions, as

indeed on every other, I muſt rely upon the candour of this audience to accept in good part the willing tribute of my faint endeavours*."

NUM. XXIV. 5—9.

Tuis, Jacobe, quantus eſt caſtris decor!
Tuiſque ſignis, Iſrael!
Ut rigua vallis fertilem pandens ſinum;
Horti ut ſcatentes rivulis;
Sacris Edenæ coſti ut in ſylvis virent,
Cedrique propter flumina.
Illi uda multo rore ſtillant germina,
Fœtuſque alunt juges aquæ.
Sancti uſque fines promovebit imperi
Rex uſque victor hoſtium.
Illum ſubacto duxit ab Nilo Deus,
Novis ſuperbum viribus,
Qualis remotis liber in jugis oryx
Fert celſa cœlo cornua.
Vorabit hoſtes; oſſa franget; irritas
Lacerabit haſtas dentibus.
Ut leo recumbit; ut leæna, decubat;
Quis audeat laceſſere?

* From Dr. Gregory's accurate and elegant tranſlation.

Quæ

Quæ quisque tibi precabitur, ferat bona!
Mala quæ precabitur, luat!

Thus tranſlated into Engliſh.

In proud array thy tents expand,
O Iſrael o'er the ſubject land:
As the broad vales in proſpect riſe,
As gardens by the waters ſpread.
As cedars of majeſtic ſize,
That ſhade the ſacred fountain's head.

Thy torrents ſhall the earth o'erflow,
O'erwhelming each obdurate foe.
In vain the mind eſſays to trace
The glories of thy countleſs race,
In vain thy king's imperial ſtate
Shall haughty Agag emulate.

His mighty God's protecting hand
Led him from Pharaoh's tyrant land.
Strong as the beaſt that rules the plain,
What power his fury ſhall reſtrain?

Who dares reſiſt his force ſhall feel
The nations ſee, and trembling fly,
Or in th' unequal conflict die,
And glut with blood his thirſty ſteel.

With aſpect keen he mark'd his prey,—
He couch'd—in ſecret ambuſh lay.—
Who ſhall the furious lion dare?
Who ſhall unmov'd his terrors ſee?
Bleſt, who for thee exalts his pray'r,
And curſt the wretch who curſeth thee!

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX. No I.

Containing SOME ACCOUNT of the Rev. Mr. HUGH OWEN, drawn up by his Grandſon, Mr. HUGH FARMER, in the Year 1775, for the Nonconformiſt's Memorial, in addition to that publiſhed by Dr. Calamy.

" His character was ſtrongly marked by compaſsion and charity. The numerous poor in his own neighbourhood, and under his extenſive paſtoral inſpection, he conſtantly viſited and relieved. When in his travels he has met with perſons ſuffering greatly by the ſeverity of the weather, for want of proper clothing, he has ſpared from his own perſon (not without ſome hazard to it) what their preſsing neceſsities ſeemed to require. At a time when the ſweating ſickneſs carried off great numbers,

and the infected were in want of proper aſsiſtance, he diligently attended them, and condeſcended to perform, even for the meaneſt, any neceſſary ſervice.

" With reſpect to the impreſsion which his unaffected piety and goodneſs made upon others, the following particulars are remarkable. When the under-ſheriff of Merioneth-ſhire apprehended him at his own houſe, in the reign of James II. he readily conſented to go with him, and only begged leave firſt to pray with his family. This he was allowed to do. When he had done, the officer being deeply affected with his devotion, told him, " He would have nothing now to ſay to him," and went away, leaving his priſoner at liberty.

" He was once confined at Lord Powis's, at Powis caſtle, but was treated with remarkable kindneſs during his confinement. Lord

Lord Powis, though a papiſt, on hearing him pray, ſaid to his prieſt, "Surely this is a good chriſtian!" and on his diſcharge, engaged him to come to Powis caſtle every Chriſtmas.

"Mr. Owen left behind him a letter of advice to his people, which he ſtiled his *Laſt Legacy*, of which the following is the ſubſtance. "Beware of worldlineſs, for I "fear leſt the world, like a canker, ſhould "eat up all the good that is in many, and "leave their ſouls like dry ſhells. Set "yourſelves againſt ſecret pride, and take "care to keep down every proud and high-"conceited thought of yourſelves upon any "account. Set yourſelves to practiſe the "great duty of ſelf-denial; yea rejoice in "opportunities of humbling yourſelves in "the very duſt, for the ſake of Jeſus; "ſtriving to be forward to forgive, forget "and paſs by, whatever any body may do "againſt

" againſt you; yea apply yourſelves firſt " for peace. Beware of the proud and high " temper that ſays, It is they offended and " not I; they ſhould come to me and not " I to them. Theſe are but the effects of " pride, and of more love to ourſelves than " to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt and his ways."

" Having given the officers and ancient members of the church a hint concerning the prudence and moderation to be uſed by them, to prevent diſputes about baptiſm, he obſerves, " That ſuch diſputes had occa- " ſioned a great breach at Wrexham, to the " diſhonour of God, and the contempt of " religion, and that thoſe who had engaged " in them had acknowledged to him, that " they had loſt the preſence of God, which " they had formerly enjoyed, and that " there was a ſtop put to the work of con- " verſion among them. I preſs you to this " (ſays he) becauſe it ſhould be the deſire

" and deſign of every member to encreaſe " the kingdom of Chriſt; to have the image " of Chriſt, and not their own opinion " ſtamped upon the ſouls of men. If I " have the image of Chriſt ſtamped on my " ſoul, I ſhall be ſure to go to heaven; but " I may enjoy both ſorts of baptiſm, and " go to hell after all."

" It may not be amiſs to add, that Mr. Owen's amiable character, eſpecially for modeſty and humility, is ſpoken of in Wales to this day with great applauſe and veneration; and that an ancient and worthy clergyman of the church of England, yet living (in 1775) communicated ſome of the above particulars *."

* From a late peruſal of the life of Mr. James Owen, it does not appear that he was related to Mr. Hugh Owen, as ſuggeſted, page 3, or that he was a ſtated aſſiſtant to that venerable man, as Dr. Calamy intimates, but that he was hoſpitably received and entertained by him in a

This account of his venerable *anceſtor* ſhews that Mr. Farmer was not aſhamed of

time of ſevere perſecution. The following paſſage, which redounds highly to Mr. Hugh Owen's character, ſeems worth inſerting here.

"After he [Mr. James Owen] had been kept in that county [viz. at Bodwel, in Caernarvonſhire] as a priſoner for about nine months, he was conveyed by night to Bronyclydwr, in Merionydſhire, the houſe of the Rev. Mr. Hugh Owen, a gentleman peculiarly eminent for humility, meekneſs, great ſerioufneſs, and unwearied diligence in his maſter's ſervice. The great encouragement he had to fix in this country, did but encreaſe the the perſecuting flame, which obliged him to remove. Upon his departure from thence, he writes thus."—"While I was with Mr. H. Owen, I had a very malignant "fever; he and ſome others of the family being ill at "the ſame time: but it pleaſed God to reſtore us both. "I had ſeveral opportunities to preach in the country, "which expoſed me to the obſervation of the neighbouring gentlemen, who threatened to iſſue out warrants "againſt me."

"In November, 1676, he had a call to Swiney, near Oſweſtrye, in Shropſhire," &c.—No account is given of his return to Bronyclydwr.—In 1699, he had an in-

his

his deſcent, nor of the principles by which the Nonconformiſts were diſtinguiſhed, among whom he was willing that his own name ſhould ſtand enrolled. It would have been a high gratification to many, as well as to the compiler of theſe papers, if he could have preſented to the public Mr. Farmer's effigies. But he never would conſent to ſit for his picture. This being the caſe, the following deſcription of his perſon may not be unacceptable to thoſe who never ſaw him.

In height he was ſomething above the middle ſize, and rather thin than corpu-

vitation to Shrewſbury, to aſſiſt good old Mr. Tallents, who ſurvived him. It was in this year that Mr. Hugh Owen died, and it is not improbable that, from their former acquaintance, he might be deſired to preach his funeral ſermon, as is related by Dr. Calamy. See Noncon. Mem. iii. 492, where there is an error of the preſs, the figure 9 being inverted.

lent;

lent; well proportioned, and of a genteel figure. His features were regular and handſome. His complexion good, though ſomewhat dark. His noſe and chin were prominent and ſharp. On loſing his teeth his mouth fell in conſiderably. His eyes were rather ſmall, and penetrating. Being ſomeſomewhat near-ſighted, they were uſually half cloſed in looking at an object. The combination of his features expreſſed dignity penetration and keenneſs, ſo as to command veneration and reſpect.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX. No. II.

MR. FARMER'S LETTERS.

Mr. FARMER, on his firſt ſettlement at Walthamſtow, commenced an intimate acquaintance with Mr. ISAAC TOMS, then chaplain in the Family of Sir DANIEL DOLENS, of Hackney, and tutor to his ſon, preaching only occaſionally. When Mr. Toms removed, to take the charge of a congregation at HADLEIGH, in Suffolk, (where he approved himſelf a moſt pious, prudent and diligent paſtor, till the year 1800, when he died at the age of 90 years) Mr. Farmer maintained an epiſtolary correſpondence with him, to their mutual edification as chriſtian miniſters. His ſon,

Mr.

Mr. S. SAY TOMS, miniſter at Framlingham, ſince the foregoing ſheets were printed, has communicated to the editor a number of Mr. Farmer's Letters to his worthy father, written at an early period; juſtly apprehending that a few of them may not improperly accompany the preſent publication*. They will doubtleſs be acceptable to many of Mr. Farmer's pious friends, as teſtimonies to his religious character, and proofs of the ſerioufneſs, humility and zeal with which, from the firſt, he engaged in the work of the chriſtian miniſtry. The world has chiefly viewed him as the learned divine, and great biblical ſcholar, here he will appear as the good

* The good ſenſe of thoſe readers who moſt admire Mr. Farmer's learned publications, will lead them to make due allowance for whatever they may obſerve in theſe Letters, inferior to them in point of compoſition, &c. conſidering that they were written at a much earlier period, and with all the freedom of private friendſhip: a circumſtance which enhances their value.

man, and the pious paſtor, ſeeking advice from one of the beſt of miniſters, a few years his ſenior, in order to his uſefulneſs to the ſouls of his flock: at the ſame time ſhewing his readineſs, in every poſsible way, to ſerve ſo valuable a friend.

LETTER I.

London, Lawrence Poultney Hill,
January 22, 1744.

DEAR SIR,

I am greatly indebted to you for your kind letter; eſpecially for the advice you give, which I ſhall endeavour to profit by. I am every day more and more ſenſible how unfit I am for every part of the miniſterial work, ſo as to be at times oppreſſed under a ſenſe of my inſufficiency. But this is what I never before opened to any but one very particular friend, and now do it to you to engage your prayers. Here, in and near the city, where good breeding has poliſhed away almoſt all ſincerity, it is, generally ſpeaking, impoſſible to mention defects which we inwardly feel and lament, leſt it ſhould be thought a more artful method of procuring praiſe. But I am encouraged to open my heart to you my dear friend, as you have opened yours to me.

Under my preſent dejection it has pleaſed God to honour me with being the inſtrument (though moſt unworthy) of the conviction, and I hope ſaving converſion, of one perſon. What I learned from her of her caſe, and which her huſband confirmed, was to this effect. She had lived in an entire neglect of God, and even of the outward forms of worſhip in a great degree. Though ſhe was bred a church-woman, her huſband being a diſſenter, brought her to our place of worſhip. It pleaſed God to fix her attention very much to what ſhe heard, and ſhe began from that time to be very thoughtful; though before, as ſhe informed me, if ſhe ever attempted to think of religion, a thouſand vain thoughts crowded in upon her mind at once. Now ſhe reliſhes nothing but ſpiritual converſe, and I hope from many other marks of converſion, is become a true chriſtian. As ſuch we admitted her to our communion the laſt ſacrament-day. I mention this to you that you may join with me in praiſing God for this inſtance of his grace, and in praying that this may be the firſt fruit of a plentiful harveſt.

I rejoice ſincerely in the great ſucceſs with which God honours you. Your zeal juſtly ſhames me. I pray God you may daily 'ſee of the travail of your ſoul and be ſa-'tisfied.' I am glad he inclines your heart to undertake the paſtoral care of the congregation, and pray that your preparatory inquiries may be guided, and that you may be led more and more into the knowledge of your maſter's will. But, amidſt your other cares, pray do not forget your health. Though as you juſtly obſerve, we ought to be willing to ſacrifice it when God calls us out to do it, you likewiſe know, it is a great chriſtian duty to endeavour

deavour to preſerve it, when he does not; that we may not ſhorten our days, and thereby our uſefulneſs. Too great bodily fatigue may occaſion that depreſſion of mind you complain of, in ſome degree, though it is certain good men find a great difference in the frame of their minds at different times. To have thoſe lively views of the favour of God at all times, which we have ſometimes, would turn earth into a paradiſe; and yet we ſhould never be eaſy without them. This caſe is particularly conſidered in Dr. Doddridge's "Riſe and Progreſs, &c." juſt publiſhed. I have not yet read it through: ſhould be glad to know your ſentiments of that performance. I ſhall never communicate any thing you write, that you deſire to have concealed.—Shew your forgiveneſs of my long ſilence by a ſpeedy anſwer. I need and deſire your advice and prayers; and I moſt earneſtly pray God to crown all your zealous labours with ſucceſs, and lift upon you the light of his countenance.

I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend and ſervant,

HUGH FARMER.

LETTER II.

DEAR SIR, *London, January 24, 1745.*

I received your [manuſcript] on "the evil of common ſwearing*," which I have read with pleaſure, and cannot but think it might be a means of doing good to put ſo ſerious a performance into the hands of the common people, who, though they may hear a ſermon now and then againſt profane ſwearing, have ſeldom had their conſciences addreſſed in a cloſe awakening manner. I am ſorry, however, that you did not make choice of a more proper perſon to correct it.—When you ſend this little tract (the more likely to be uſeful for being ſmall) into the world, I ſincerely pray that the bleſſing of God may accompany it.

Since I wrote to you laſt, I have had a fever, but have great reaſon to be thankful to God for recovering me from it; for certainly it muſt be a great mercy to have more time allowed to improve in our meetneſs for the heavenly felicity. Yet during my illneſs it pleaſed God to revive me with as comfortable a hope of his favour as I ever enjoyed, ſo that death appeared greatly deſirable. It is nothing but the light of God's countenance that gives a luſtre and a ſweetneſs to our brighteſt days, and this enlightens and cheers us in circumſtances of the deepeſt diſtreſs. O! that in every ſtate I might be

* This is one of the tracts given away by the Society for promoting Religious Knowledge among the Poor.

bleſſed

bleſſed with a pleaſing conſciouſneſs of my integrity, and with a refreſhing aſſurance of the divine favour, joined, as it always ought to be, with a deep and juſt ſenſe of my manifold defects and great unworthineſs. True humility and holy rejoicing are not enemies to each other. —I ſhall be glad to hear from you, and in the mean time pray that all divine bleſſings may be multiplied upon you.

I am, dear Sir,
your very ſincere affectionate friend
and obliged humble ſervant,
H. FARMER.

P. S. I am greatly obliged to you for your bibles — — I propoſe to lay out part of what I can ſpare for charity in ſuch gifts, eſpecially as the bible is the only book I can give amongſt the church people; and indeed they have had almoſt all I have given away, moſt of the diſſenters being provided. One thing lies upon my mind which I ſhould be glad of your advice about. How can a diſſenting miniſter be uſeful to thoſe children whoſe parents go to church, and yet neglect to inſtruct them? Suppoſe the caſe too, that both prejudice and intereſt indiſpoſe them for receiving the benefit that is ſincerely wiſhed them? Theſe points have been your ſtudy, and I pray God they may every day more and more be mine.

LETTER III.

DEAR SIR, *March* 12, 1745.

If I were aſked which of your letters I liked beſt, I ſhould be forced to anſwer, as the Roman orator did, when the ſame queſtion was put to him with regard to the Orations of Demoſthenes, and ſay "the longeſt." Though you forbid me from giving you even juſt commendations, and I allow this to be a caution fit to be obſerved in our friendly correſpondence when there is not an abſolute neceſſity of departing from it, yet you muſt give me leave to ſay that my mind is deeply affected with your kindneſs in beſtowing ſo much of your time upon me, when you know ſo well the value of it. I hope, however, that part of your time you ſpent in endeavouring to adminiſter comfort to me was not altogether loſt, with regard to *me*, I mean; for with regard to the perſon that performs it, you well know, no 'labour in the Lord *can* be in vain.'

But tell me (my much eſteemed friend) if it be not difficult to become quite dead to the preſent world, and to ſerve Chriſt in the miniſtry with ſingleneſs of heart, and without the leaſt mixture of low and improper motives?—The happieſt diſpoſition in the world, and at the ſame time the hardeſt to be attained, is a willingneſs to forego eſteem and every worldly intereſt, without heſitation, in order to approve our fidelity to God. Did we perform every action from this motive alone, we might

might expect the preſence and bleſſing of God, and our hearts would be lifted up into a holy confidence and joy. Oh! when ſhall I be entirely purged from pride and all worldly affections, that I may be 'a veſſel of honour, 'and fit for my maſter's uſe!' Are you got quite above the world,—the beſt and worſt of it?—

I thank God for the great encouragement you meet with in your work, and pray that you may have more ſeals to your miniſtry. If you deſire, however, to be long ſerviceable to the Redeemer's intereſt, ſpare your conſtitution * as much as you can, conſiſtently with your preſent duty. I know the advice is painful. I find it a great exerciſe and trial of my own reſignation to God, to make myſelf eaſy in being lodged in a body that hinders me from many duties I ſhould be glad to perform. I ſincerely rejoice in your recovery from your late indiſpoſition, but am grieved that your joy in this and other mercies is embittered by your ſorrow on another account. You, Sir, would with great ſkill, caution your chriſtian friend againſt ſuffering himſelf to be overwhelmed with grief, and direct him to gather ſtrength even from his very infirmities, by improving them as motives to humility, watchfulneſs, diligence, and humble joy in the grace of God by Jeſus Chriſt.

Tender parents do not uſe ſeverity towards a dutiful child for ſuch faults as are conſiſtent with his fidelity and affection; eſpecially when he diſcovers a penitent ſenſe of them. No doubt you have often exhorted others in ſuch a caſe to think much of the love of God in the Re-

* Which was always very delicate.

deemer; that being effectual at once both to excite a godly ſorrow, and to reſtrain it; nay, to mingle pleaſure along with it. And what is more than all, to ſecure the true end of it: the encreaſe of our love, zeal, and caution, and an humble dependence upon God.

I cannot but hope and believe that God has ſuffered this cloud to hang upon your mind, to inſpire you with a peculiar ſenſibility and compaſſion towards them that are bowed down. I have often heard it obſerved, that God prepares his ſervants for eminent ſervices by calling them to paſs through ſuch ſcenes of trial and ſorrow, as you deſcribe in your laſt. But I hope now a bright day is introduced into your ſoul: it ſeemed to be even then beginning to dawn.

According to your requeſt, I went to ſee Mrs. B——, whom I found in a languiſhing condition of body, and under great dejection of mind.—I went to prayer with her, and converſed as long as her weakneſs would bear; and I purpoſe, if poſſible, to repeat my viſit this week. She was deeply affected with your goodneſs in ſending me to her.—With difficulty I prevailed on her to accept of a ſmall token of my reſpect.———

I ſuppoſe by this time you have peruſed Dr. Doddridge's late book on "the Riſe and Progreſs, &c." I deſire you to tell me your mind freely concerning it in general, and one particular paſſage, p. 85*.—Is this agreeable to your own experience, or that of other judicious chriſtians? When you return WALL and

* The paſſage referred to ſeems to have been altered in the next edition, and therefore is here omitted.

GALE

GALE [on Baptiſm] pray inform me how that matter appears to you. I am at preſent clearly ſatisfied in the right of Infants, according to the original grant of the covenant, *Gen.* xvii. 7.—but wonder at the warmth with which this controverſy is managed amongſt good men.

Make mention of me always in your prayers, and be aſſured of my remembrance of you.—The good family where I am will always eſteem and love you. But what higher reliſh ſhould we have of the favour and love of God! Think much of that: and when your thoughts deſcend to lower objects, do not forget him who, under many obligations, is moſt ſincerely and affectionately yours,

H. FARMER.

LETTER IV.

No date.

REV. SIR,

I received the other day a very valuable preſent, which from the goodneſs of it, as well as from other circumſtances, I conclude came from you. I wiſh that admirable ſpirit of piety, and that zeal to do good to the ſouls of men which your performance diſcovers, were ſo common as not to be the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic of a few writings. Heu pietas! Heu priſca fides! If your method of inſtruction were but followed, we might hope that, by the bleſſing of God, religion would be revived.——

It

It is aſtoniſhing to think how ignorant thoſe are who go conſtantly to public worſhip, if they are deprived of the benefit of private inſtruction. I have had frequent opportunities of obſerving this, and therefore am pleaſed with every attempt to communicate divine knowledge to the riſing generation. And it is a great grief to me to obſerve men's blind attachment to one catechiſm, ſo as not to be able to make uſe of any other, becauſe it does not contain, in their apprehenſion, all the myſteries of the chriſtian faith. What do you do in ſuch circumſtances? Are there none ſo zealouſly attached to certain phraſes which you cannot uſe, as to be hindered from receiving benefit by your inſtructions? If there are any ſuch, what method do you take to reconcile them to you? The knowledge of your ſentiments and conduct relating to theſe points may be of ſervice to me. Do not deny me your ſpiritual counſel, nor your moſt ardent prayers, that God would inſpire me, and all the miniſters of his word, with greater zeal to do good (guided by wiſdom and prudence) and with a more intenſe concern to approve ourſelves faithful to the great 'ſhepherd and biſhop of ſouls.' I recommend you heartily to God and the bleſſing of his grace,

And am, Sir,

Your ſincere friend and humble ſervant,

HUGH FARMER.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

Lawrence Poultney Hill,
DEAR SIR, *Wednesday Night. (No date).*

I have been this day with good Mrs. B——, who is ſtill in the ſame diſ-ſpirited condition, though I think ſhe ſeems to be better in health. She deſired me to inform you that ſhe is under great concern about her daughter——— and meets with many other troubles —— I wiſh it lay in my power to recommend her grandſon. ——I delivered your "Conſiderations," &c *. and heartily wiſh the bleſſing of God may attend them. Our [public] affairs, being at preſent in very much the ſame poſture they were in when you wrote, I made no alterations in your paper, nor can I now, becauſe it is, I ſuppoſe, publiſhed: Though to-morrow we expect news of an action between the troops under the Duke and the rebels, the laſt advice informing us that they were within four miles of one another. But ſome think the rebels will, if poſſible, decline coming to an engagement with the king's troops. But the hearts of all men are in the hands of God, and ſo are the fates of nations. For his own name ſake I hope he will ſave us. God grant we may be prepared to meet him, whether he comes to us in the way of judgment or of mercy.——

* Relating to the Rebellion in 1745. Mr. Toms was accuſtomed to print ſmall religious pieces ſuited to the times, to be diſtributed gratis.

With regard to the character of the Highlanders, they are mountain robbers, who live by plundering the lowlands, and are miſerable vaſſals to their chiefs, whom they are obliged to ſerve wherever and as long as they are required: bred up in Romiſh ſuperſtition and ignorance. And they are joined by the Scotch Epiſcopalians, or Non-jurors, who though they differ but little from the former, and never gave the government any ſecurity for their fidelity, have enjoyed a toleration, and many of them are indebted to the preſent royal family, not only for their liberty but their lives; and ſome had received particular marks of the king's favour. But to ſerve the Catholic cauſe, the vileſt crimes are even ſanctified.

Popery is a myſtery of iniquity, which ought to be deeply ſearched into, that it may be expoſed to view. The great art of the Engliſh prieſts lies in diſguiſing and palliating it. Their doctrine and practice with regard to one capital point, is well repreſented in a ſmall performance, called "Britain's Memorial againſt the Pre-"tender and Popery." Mr. Chandler is the author. I mention this, becauſe a proper one to give away.

I have not written to Dr. Doddridge upon the head you deſired, becauſe I know his hands are full. Pray let me hear from you ſoon. Should be glad of any opportunity of ſerving you in town. I approve your ſcheme of a 2d Edition of "The Inſincere Profeſſor." Wiſh to know when I may to ſee you. In the mean time I remain,

Your moſt ſincere friend,
And very humble ſervant,

H. FARMER.

LETTER

LETTER V.

Jan. 28, 1747.
REV. AND DEAR SIR, *At Mr. Hett's Shop.*

— — Your "Memoirs"*—I have put into the hands of Mr. Johnſon, in order to be ſent to the preſs.—I have not ventured to make any alteration in your copy, both becauſe I cannot very well read it, and becauſe I hope it does not require any; unleſs it be in the paſſage that refers to Mr. Foſter †. I have juſt reaſon to ſuſpect my own judgment, but your friend Mr. Barker ſeems to think it might be as prudent to decline ſaying any thing perſonal; though he approves much of your general obſervation, that my Lord Kil—ck's deſiring the Sacrament, looked as if he wanted ſomething beyond Repentance. You do not doubt of our zeal for the doctrine you maintain. The only point in doubt is, whether it will ſerve that doctrine to introduce Mr. F.'s omiſſion, and whether it may not prejudice ſome againſt your book, and hinder them from receiving that benefit which may reaſonably be expected if it contained nothing per-

* Of a remarkable Convert, with a ſermon preached at his death.

† Afterwards Dr. Foſter, who publiſhed an account of his attendance on the rebel nobleman Lord Kilmarnock, previous to his execution. The piece gave offence to many, being thought defective in regard to the Goſpel method of Salvation.

ſonal,

ſonal, or that had any appearance of determining in what manner Mr. F—— will be treated by his judge. But this I ſubmit entirely to your judgment. I could wiſh I was better able to adviſe you. I know many of my brethren whoſe judgment might perhaps be of uſe in reviſing what you deſign for the preſs; but in zeal to ſerve you, none I believe can eaſily go beyond me. I I moſt readily engage to take * * and correct the preſs. So far as I can judge, this piece is well calculated to do good, and I moſt ſincerely pray that your end in publiſhing it may be anſwered. I ſhall put it into the hands of ſeveral.

I bleſs God I know of one, who lives in a friend's family, lately awakened and converted in much the ſame manner as your Convert, by the divine bleſſing, on reading ſuch books as Dr. Wright on Regeneration, which I put into her hands, and I verily believe your "Memoirs" will be a great comfort and advantage to her. May it advance the Redeemer's intereſt in many!

Mr. Johnſon is of opinion you had better publiſh the Sermon and Memoirs together—unleſs therefore we hear from you to the contrary, they will be ſo publiſhed, and with all convenient ſpeed.

I am, dear Sir,

Your moſt affectionate friend and ſervant,

H. FARMER.

* * Covered with the ſeal.

Extract from another Letter.

—— I thank you very kindly for your laſt directions with regard to —— So far as they are practicable I ſhall take care to follow them. But no inſtance of your chriſtian friendſhip is more grateful than the hint you drop about the danger of engaging in religious ſervices without a religious frame. Nothing is more grievous to me than a defect in this. What but divine goodneſs could pardon even my beſt ſervices! The more I ſtudy myſelf, the more cauſe do I ſee to lament my infinite diſtance from what I ought to be. But bleſſed be God, this thought leads me to the continual exerciſe of repentance and faith, and of earneſt deſires after further communications from the God of all grace, to whoſe care you are ever recommended by your affectionate friend and unworthy brother,

H. F.

*** Since theſe ſheets were printed off, the editor has been informed, by the Rev. T. Stedman, rector of St. Chad's, Shrewſbury, that Mr. Farmer's place of nativity was a ſmall hamlet called "the Iſle," being almoſt ſurrounded by the river Severn, where his father lived upon a ſmall farm in that part, called "the Iſle Gate;" which place, though three miles diſtant, belongs to the above pariſh, where his name is regiſtered in a part of that pariſh regiſter, which is appropriated to the children of diſſenters.

A letter ſince communicated by this gentleman, from Mr. Farmer to Dr. Doddridge, though not altogether fit for publication, is valuable as an evidence of high mutual eſteem, and a continuation of a friendly correſpondence.

THE END.

Printed by G. Woodfall, Paternoſter-row.

CORRECTIONS.

Since this work was publiſhed, the author has been informed, from good authority, that the account given p. 28, 29, from the *Biog. Brit.* of the deſtruction of two of Mr. Farmer's works there mentioned, is incorrect; no ſuch pieces being found among his papers; ſo that it is ſuppoſed he had deſtroyed them himſelf. This opportunity is voluntarily embraced of doing juſtice to his worthy executors, who had been blamed in the above work, for carrying their ſcrupuloſity too far.

The words in the parentheſis, p. 14, having been thought liable to be miſunderſtood, it ſeems proper to aſſure the reader, that the compariſon between Dr. Kippis and Mr. Farmer, was intended only with reference to their MANNER in the pulpit, or mode of delivery.

P. 108, line 4, from the bottom, to the word *hypotheſis*, add this note. Mr. MASON, in his ſermon referred to p. 52, mentions this hypotheſis as now general, and adds, "The prophet himſelf ſeems to explain the matter in this "ſenſe (that is, as viſionary) Ch. xxiv. 3, 4, where he "alludes to the very circumſtance of his *eyes being ſhut*, "for ſome time, *falling into a trance*."

Several more of Mr. Farmer's letters were received too late to be inſerted. Some paſſages in them might have been properly interwoven in his Memoirs.

G. Woodfall, Printer, Paternoſter-row.

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